THE COMMUNIST

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The Rising Strike Movement

THE number of strikes has risen greatly in the past week. While the strikes do not yet embrace the great masses in the various industries (except textile, shoe) they point to a rapid spread of the strike movement in all industries. The strikes are scattered throughout the country and embrace almost all industries. It is precisely this fact, that we must recognize as indicative of the approaching mass struggles.

In the first years of the crisis the strike movement was almost exclusively linked to four industries (mining, textile, needle and building). In the first five months of this year, we can already record mass strikes in the following industries—auto, shoe, textile, mining, needle, food, light metal, and among fishermen and agricultural workers.

The only industry in which we do not as yet observe strikes is the steel industry. The strikes in the building trades in the main bear the character of struggles against forced labor on municipal and State undertakings.

We can readily find the cause for the failure of strikes to materialize in these industries. The cause lies in the great weakness of the subjective forces (our organizations and their orientation) in the industries where there are great difficulties to be overcome (trustified industries such as steel; the existence of comparatively stronger unions in the building trades, and the weakness of our opposition within them). We must look upon the present strikes and their very character (various industries and geographical distribution) as signals of a great storm. The fact that from the outset these strikes do not yet embrace large masses in all industries is due to many factors which can be overcome. The decisive question is the extent to which we are able to take hold of, lead, develop, extend and deepen this strike movement.

These strikes are to a large extent spontaneous, although they include strikes of organized workers of both American Federation of Labor and Trade Union Unity League unions. They embrace various sections of the masses. For example, especially large numbers of women and children are involved in textile, in needle and in the canneries. We have a large number of colonial workers among the argricultural workers and among the fisheries, and an increasing number of Negro workers (St. Louis).

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The role of the Trade Union Unity League leadership is increasing in these strikes, while the role of the A. F. of L. is decreasing in comparison to last year. A new feature in these strikes is the role of independent unions, such as the Progressive Miners in the mining industry, the National Shoe Union, etc. No matter what groups of workers, no matter what strike, the A. F. of L. enters the strike in an effort to bring disruption in the ranks of the workers, especially where the strikes are led by the T. U. U. L. *The most significant characteristic of the present strike movement is that the overwhelming number of the strikes have been won. This is a new feature for the United States which sets in with the winning of the Detroit auto strikes in the early months of this year.* In spite of increasing unemployment, there is evident a greater solidarity of the unemployed with those on strike.

With regard to the government, we observe not only terror, but we observe a double policy. On the one hand, open strikebreaking—use of troops and police; on the other hand, increasing use of the federal and State labor departments for conciliation. These strikes, inevitably bring the workers face to face with political problems. Already, there is a greater political consciousness among the masses, although still coupled with many illusions and distortions.

In the year 1931 we witnessed the first big strike since the beginning of the present economic crisis. It was only after these strikes, that we witnessed the rise of the movement of impoverished farmers and the war veterans, the movement of various strata of the urban petty bourgeoisie and white collar workers (home owners, professionals, etc.). It was the struggles of the employed and unemployed workers that stimulated these movements. The veterans' march, for instance, was largely influenced by the first successful unemployed hunger march. The struggles of the farmers followed the big strikes of the miners, the textile workers, the marine workers, the agricultural workers.

For a while, when these movements of the non-proletarian masses were gaining great momentum and there was a lull in the strike struggles of the workers, the opportunist elements of the Calverton stripe began to create theories of the leadership of the petty bourgeoisie in the mass movement. They did not realize that it was the mass struggles of the workers that set in motion the struggles of the other strata of the masses. Nor, did they realize, that under the difficult conditions (mass unemployment, strike breaking role of the A. F. of L. leaders, etc.), even the small strikes of the workers were of the greatest significance for the

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whole mass movement in the United States. We can look forward to a renewal of an even larger scale of the struggles of non-proletarian masses as the strike movement unfolds.

* * * *

What are the special factors that give rise at this time to the spreading strike movement? First, this is due to the growing depth of the radicalization of the masses as a result of their cumulative experiences in the course of the deepening crisis. One by-product of this radicalization is the growing desire and struggle for unity on the part of the workers. Secondly, the level of wages in many industries (mining, textile, etc.) is so low that the workers must ask for relief to be able to give even bread to their families. This creates a greater fighting spirit among the workers and overcomes the fear caused by mass unemployment, the loss of a job. It also leads to greater solidarity among the employed and unemployed workers. Thirdly, the workers are responding to the attack in the form of inflation, which although not yet fully felt is already a factor in their living standard. Fourthly, the workers are now taking advantage of the temporary rise in production in some of the industries (textile). This rise, of course, does not in any way point to a let-down of the crisis. It is due primarily to the following factors: the general seasonal increases which by themselves are even below normal; to delayed buying because of the banking holiday; to speculative buying in connection with the government inflation program. Finally, we must take into account the role of the Roosevelt government in giving an estimate as to the causes of the increasing strike movement.

The workers, in substantial numbers, are already becoming disillusioned with the fulfilment of the Roosevelt promises. After three months of the "new deal" they see their conditions growing worse. They begin to understand that the whole Roosevelt program has been one attack after another on their living standards. They have seen workers' small savings wiped out with the closing of many banks. They have seen the government cutting down the veterans' allowances by over $500,000,000 and the wages of government employees reduced by 15 per cent while new subsidies are granted to the capitalists. They see the government abandoning its promises of unemployment insurance and instead militarizing a quarter of a million unemployed youth in the reforestation camps at a dollar-a-day wage. They realize that only through struggle can they improve their conditions and they come to the conclusion that this is the only road.

On the other hand, the very attempts of the government further

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to maintain and create new illusions regarding the role of the "new deal," while not entirely ineffective and representing a great danger which must be counteracted, simultaneously increases the fighting spirit of the workers. Thus, for example, President Roosevelt demagogically calls upon the employers to raise wages, in an attempt to stop the strike movement. The workers in the shops are taking these words at their face value. They are, in many instances, demanding increases. The Roosevelt "exposures" of the House of Morgan and other bankers, the "exposure" of the sweatshop conditions, etc.,—all these are a double-edged sword. While they create illusions, at the very same time they create great indignation among the masses which can be turned into sharp struggles through which these very illusions can be shattered.

The capitalists continue to do all in their power to stop the rising strike movement. At first, they thought this could be achieved through intensive "prosperity" propaganda and the proposed government legislation. When they found that this did not work, they began to give, in many instances, small wage increases. These increases in themselves are almost insignificant. For example, textile workers were given a 5 per cent increase when the wages were as low as $5 a week. Such increases amount to 25 cents. But the very publicity given to these increases, through which the employers hoped to check the strike movement, only served to stimulate strikes. In many industries including textile, mining, the employers have already announced increases of 10, 12½ and 15 per cent.

There can be no doubt that to an extent this will serve to stop strikes for the moment. In Lawrence, for example, the bosses were compelled to announce a 12½ per cent wage increase. Some 10,000 workers were called back to work. It is, of course, uncertain how long they will work. But for the moment the workers feel that they must get back on the job and will not strike at once. Yet even in Lawrence, even after the announcement of the wage increase, department strikes are breaking out against long hours and speed-up. The important thing to remember, however, is that the wage increase in Lawrence is already creating struggles in other textile centers where the bosses are compelled to give increases, and is also affecting other industries.

In the Pittsburgh region, the coal operators were compelled to give a 10 per cent increase to some 8,000 miners. Without doubt this was mainly a result of the successful struggles now led by the National Miners Union, in which many thousands of workers win better conditions.

If we take hold and lead the movement, the employers will not be able to stop the growing struggles through these insignificant

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wage increases. Even where the strike movement is temporarily halted, it will break out anew. The workers are in a fighting mood.

* * * * *

Precisely because of the recognition of the fighting mood of the workers, and the fact that the crisis, notwithstanding certain temporary increases in some industries, is deepening, and the whole international situation is becoming sharper, the government in Washington has now come forward with its so-called National Industrial Recovery Bill. This bill represents an attempt to stop the growing class struggle at home, and to prepare the country for imperialist war. It is an attempt to use the Hitler-Mussolini methods of regulating production, labor, etc., suited to present conditions in the United States. It is essential to conduct the most thorough and systematic exposure of this bill.

What are the main features of this Bill? First, it proposes to abolish the anti-trust laws and establish organized units in all industries under the supervision of the government. It provides for new subsidies for the capitalists and will guarantee minimum profits through fixing prices, etc. It will mean the driving out of the smaller capitalists and the further concentration and centralization in fewer hands. It aims to set up a planned economy. This, of course, will meet with defeat. Even government spokesmen admit that it will not abolish competition but "raise it to a higher level." This is exactly what is taking place in the course of the development of imperialism and leads not only to competition "on a higher plane" at home, but internationally, culminating in imperialist war. This phase of the bill is not a curbing of the big trusts, as the liberals would have us believe, nor control by the government of finance capital. On the contrary, it means greater control of the government by finance capital, by the very big capitalists, through squeezing out the smaller ones. It means government action to guarantee big profits to the bankrupt industries at the expense of the masses. It is also connected up, of course, with the preparations for the coming imperialist war. It is no accident that Hugh Johnson, who organized industry during the war, is made head of the new commission set up to administer the Bill.

The Bill provides for regulation of hours of labor and the fixing of a minimum wage for the respective industries. This means, first of all, that the stagger plan will be applied under a new name. That is the essence of the proposed shorter workday. Second, the minimum wage will be fixed and while a very small section of the workers will get temporarily slight increases in wages, the wages of the mass of workers will be reduced to new low levels. The various industries that are now meeting to plan the application of

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this Bill in their respective industries, also make clear that the government will not do anything for the mass of the unemployed. While they hope to absorb a small portion of the unemployed through the stagger plan, through the public works program by means of which new battleships are to be built and for which the workers will pay through new proposed taxes, they realize that under the best conditions there will be a large and growing army of millions of unemployed, whose number today is close to seventeen million. Various industries are proposing "unemployment insurance" within the respective industries, to apply only to those still employed. There is no provision for the masses of unemployed, and these will receive no benefits, even, although very unlikely, these schemes are enforced. These various schemes aim to stop the growing struggles for unemployment insurance and to disrupt the united actions of the unemployed and employed. To a certain extent, the capitalists and the government are consciously trying to overcome the weakening of the base of the labor aristocracy which has already taken place, and which under the bill will take place further through the reduction of the wages of skilled workers, by a new promoted division between the employed and the unemployed. We must exert all our power to prevent this.

One of the most vicious phases of the Bill is the creation of machinery for compulsory arbitration. The aim here is to outlaw strikes, to crush the militant labor organizations and to utilize the A. F. of L. as a semi-governmental labor organization somewhat similar to the Hitler-Mussolini method. Already, the attack against the Fur Workers section of the Needle Trades Workers Industrial Union, in which are involved the federal government, the local police, the bosses' associations, the A. F. of L. leadership and the Socialists, is an indication of how this Bill will work. While the attack is made now against this union and to an extent against the independent union of miners in Illinois (Progressive Miners of America), such an attack has in mind the destruction of all militant trade unions and crushing all oppositions within the A. F. of L. The issue already involved in the attack against the fur workers is not merely one against a Red union. *It is against all unions as fighting organizations of labor, as organs of the class struggle.* This union has succeeded in winning the overwhelming majority of the workers in the industry to its banner. *It is the one united trade union in the industry.* It has won improved conditions under the greatest difficulties. It is a challenge to every labor bureaucrat in the country, especially the Socialist bureaucrats in the needle trades unions of the A. F. of L. This is why we have all these forces marching with the government and the police, the underworld, in an attempt

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to destroy this union. The fight of the fur workers is now the fight of the entire working class. The issue involved here is of concern to every worker. The issue is *to defend the trade unions as organs of the class struggle,* and the *right of the workers to belong to any union they wish*; it is the free and democratic control by the workers of their organizations and *against converting the trade unions into agencies of the capitalists and the government.*

* * * * *

The A. F. of L. leadership fully supports the Roosevelt program. It is trying everywhere to prevent the workers from fighting, because, they say, soon the government will solve all the problems of the workers. The "left" Sidney Hillman tells the workers that now his life dream is being realized. He tells the workers, "Don't look to the Communists, the Socialists, etc., to help you; only the government will help you." The Greens and the Wolls have always sided with the capitalists. It is no great surprise that they now give their full support to the capitalist attack. On the surface it may appear that there are some differences, or at least difficulties, between the A. F. of L. top bureaucracy and the Roosevelt administration. It is merely the effort of the government to make plain to the Greens and Wolls that they must attempt no independent role but completely follow the government program, and simultaneously the government is even encouraging an air of "opposition" on the part of the leaders in order that these leaders, who have lost much standing among the masses, shall be able to put over the Roosevelt program among the workers.

The Socialist Party talks about the "inadequacy" (Thomas) and "inconsistency" (Oneal) of the Roosevelt program. They praise Roosevelt for some "achievements" and criticize" what was left undone. But in practice they help carry through the program. The Socialist Party leaders' stand on the attack upon the fur workers is a very enlightening example. It shows what they will do in the coming big struggles. The Socialist Party leaders, of course, do not hesitate to cover up their actions with radical phrases; this all the more as the rank and file in many sections is rebelling against the Socialist Party policies and leadership and is entering into united actions with the Communists.

The further development of the struggle along correct lines is unthinkable without an exposure of the government policies, the role of the A. F. of L. leadership and the Socialist Party. And it is precisely here that we must observe a great weakness in the revolutionary trade union movement. The very extension of the strike movement, not to speak of carrying through our goal—the revolutionization of the masses in the course of these struggles—is im-

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possible without the unions overcoming the "narrow trade union" approach to these problems. Especially now, is it essential to carry on a struggle against "pure and simple" trade unionism, against all forms of "neutrality" which in reality mean the subjugation of the whole movement to the politics of the bourgeoisie.

Today when most of the workers are compelled to think politically, there exist greater opportunities than ever before to bring our class politics to the toiling masses. This should not and must not be interpreted to mean any let-down in the struggle for immediate economic demands. On the contrary, more emphasis should be placed on the working out of concrete economic demands for each struggle. Certainly, there can be no replacing of the concrete demands in a given struggle by general demands, as was the case in the revolutionary trade union movement some time ago. To mobilize the masses in the struggle for their economic needs it is necessary to prepare them by a struggle against the illusions being created through the demagogy of the government and the reformists. Furthermore, each struggle for economic demands under present conditions, inevitably involves also, the struggle for certain political rights which are being attacked by the government, such as the right to organize, strike injunctions, government arbitration, etc. But this alone will not suffice to raise the workers to a higher political consciousness. For this it is necessary that we shall bring to the workers our analysis of the crisis, the revolutionary way out of the crisis, the achievements in the Soviet Union, the teachings of Marxism-Leninism, the role of the Party, as the vanguard of the proletariat, in the day-to-day struggles against the capitalist offensive and in the final struggle against capitalism.

But, what can be observed in the strike struggles led by the revolutionary trade unions or the revolutionary oppositions in the reformist unions? Even such questions as the fight for unemployment insurance and the whole struggle of the unemployed, are not given sufficient attention. There is a reluctance to raise and defend the special issues and the needs of the Negro workers, the foreign born, the youth—these problems and issues which are organically connected up with the immediate struggle. And above all, there is evident an almost conscious resistance to bringing forward the Party, on the ground that this would antagonize the "backward" workers. Of course, without a doubt, many mistakes are made in putting forward the Party. Often this is done in such a mechanical manner that it does not result in strengthening the unity of the workers. Such mistakes must be eliminated.

What is the main source and difficulty which gives rise to this

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resistance in practice of bringing forward the Party? It arises from the mechanical division between Party work and trade union work, from the fact that the Party organizations as such do not actively participate in the economic struggles of the masses. The Party is given the role of appearing before the masses merely with agitation for the revolution, or such special questions as the freedom of Mooney, the Scottsboro campaign, the struggle against war, etc. The Party does not appear before the masses as the fighter for their immediate interests. It is therefore clear that bringing forward the Party in the economic struggles must be done on the basis of the Party openly taking up the fight for the immediate interests of the masses from the very beginning, and in this way the Paty will be in a position to lead the masses at every stage in their development.

* * * * *

The Party and the T.U.U.L. were not sufficiently prepared to take full advantage of the present rising strike movement. This was clearly revealed in a number of strikes in which our role was a minor one. Instead of being in a position of giving real leadership to the strike, the Party and the revolutionary unions were confronted with the most elementary task of establishing the first contacts. This was true in Salem, in the Amoskeag strike and numerous other strikes. In many strikes we suffered especially because of isolation from the workers organized in reformist unions. Here the effects of the abandonment of work in the A. F. of L. for a number of years was quite evident. The greatest weakness of all was the still insignificant organizational contact in the shops.

Notwithstanding these fundamental weaknesses, the T.U.U.L. unions played an important and increasing role in the strikes of this year. There is a decided improvement in this connection, in relation to the previous year. The unions correctly orientated themselves on the basis of developing struggles. The policy of establishing the united front was followed with more clarity and resulted in greater successes. The unions quickly reacted to most of the strikes, even in those cases where before the strike the unions had not yet established contact. There was also a better understanding on how to expose the policy of the reformists on the basis of concrete facts and deeds in the given struggles.

These improvements in the work of the unions did not come about without a sharp struggle against opportunist elements which continued to hamper the development of the mass work. Thus, for example, in the strikes of the miners there were many elements that still underestimated the willingness of the miners to fight and who counterposed mechanically the question of preparation and develop-

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ing and leading of the immediate struggles. They maintained this position while under their very nose the miners were striking. Especially was this true in the East Ohio fields, where this opportunist policy on the part of some of the leaders in the union led to the U.M.W.A. (in the 1932 strike) taking hold and betraying the struggle of the miners. In the auto strikes there was an opportunist recoiling before the attacks of the reformists, instead of clearly facing the issues that were raised by them and exposing them before the masses as the agents of the bosses. This led to the fact that the Auto Workers Union lost the leadership of the Briggs Mack Avenue plant strike. In this strike there was also a failure to bring forward the Party, with the result that the Party recruited very few members in the course of the mass strikes. This, unfortunately, was not limited to the strikes of auto workers alone, but is to be observed in many of the struggles that have taken place.

The immediate situation is one of increasing and ever sharper class battles. Only on the basis of a correct policy, of persistent work in the shops, the development of the united front, the development of the initiative of the masses, an exposure and struggle against the government and the reformist leaders, will our still weak organizations be able to measure up to the situation and grow in the course of the struggles. This requires that we bring before the membership of the revolutionary organizations and before the masses the lessons of our experiences, the resolutions of the E.C.C.I. and the R.I.L.U., and create real clarity on correct Bolshevik mass work. It requires that the Party organizations shall recognize as their central task the work in the factories and the trade unions, and that this work shall have the content of Bolshevik activity. A problem which is of paramount importance in the face of the rising strike wave and the weakness of our organizations is the concentration of our activity in the most decisive districts, in the most decisive branches of industry and factories.

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A Warning Against Opportunist Distortions of the United Front Tactic

By C. A. HATHAWAY

RECENT weeks have seen a great increase in united front sentiment, and the actual carrying through of a number of effective mass actions on a united front basis. This has been accompanied by more energetic counter-measures and deceptive maneuvers on the part of the bourgeoisie and their reformist agents to head off the movement of the masses to the left which would inevitably result from their participation in mass united front struggles. These two developments—the mass support for a united front of struggle and the maneuvers of the reformists to block such struggles — make it necessary to examine most carefully our application of the united front tactic in light of the concrete situation, including the effectiveness with which we have exposed the reformist maneuvers.

The increase in the sentiment of the masses for united struggle has its roots in the objective situation—the deepening of the crisis and the measures sponsored by Roosevelt for a way out through placing still greater burdens on the masses (economy measures, increased militarization, measures against unions, forced labor, increased terror, preparations for a new war now sensed by the masses, etc.). Together with this there has been the application of the united front tactic with greater boldness by the Communist Party on the basis of the united front manifesto of the Communist Intenational.

The road to the further development of broad united front struggles is the energetic taking up of *the day to day needs* of the workers as they are effected by Roosevelt's hunger and war program and there, in connection with these most vital issues, exposing the reactionary role of the reformist misleaders. This point must be emphasized: *There are no issues which are more favorable to the development of mass struggles on a united front basis than these issues which daily affect the lives of all toilers*—the workers and farmers, Negro and white.

The Mooney issue, Scottsboro, May Day and similar issues can often serve to set the masses in motion, bringing them possibly for

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the first time in contact with Communist leadership, but these actions will only serve their purpose and provide the greatest benefit to the workers, if they result in bringing the masses into struggle around the vital economic and political issues that daily confront the toilers as a whole. In other words in our further efforts to develop mass struggles the *first consideration must be given to strengthening the work in the factories, in the trade unions and among the unemployed.* Here is where the broadest united front can be set up, and here the class-collaboration policies of the reformist leaders *on all questions* can be most effectively exposed to the masses. United front actions on other specific issues must serve to draw the masses into these most basic struggles.

* * * * *

The united front tactic during recent weeks has been applied chiefly in relation to the "Free Tom Mooney Congress," the campaign to free the nine Scottsboro boys, the protest campaign against German fascism, and May Day, with here and there local efforts to carry on united front struggles on other issues (New York Bakers' strike, furriers, scattered unemployed actions, etc.).

These activities have undoubtedly given a great stimulus to the movement for united action for the workers' demands. The "Free Tom Mooney Congress" brought together more workers' organizations, reflecting a cross section of the present divided working class movement (A. F. of L. and Socialist locals, various other reformist groups, unemployed organizations, fraternal bodies and Communists) than any previous gathering since the Farmer-Labor movement of 1924. The campaign against German fascism in those cities where it was undertaken, resulted in embracing in the main, the same groups. May Day, in a whole series of cities (New York, Chicago, Detroit, etc.), saw the coming together of all the more left groupings, and in a number of cities also numerous Socialist and A. F. of L. locals. In those cities where united front tactics were effectively applied, May Day saw the biggest demonstrations ever held. (In Chicago the S. P. had 830 people in their march, while in the united front march 35,000 participated in a driving rain.) The Scottsboro campaign in Harlem after the Patterson verdict, became by far the broadest of these movements, involving tens of thousands of people, and all strata of the population. These movements, although confined chiefly to meetings, conferences and demonstrations, marked a serious beginning in the effort to broaden out the mass work of our Party. *Their chief significance, in relation to the problems of the workers as a whole, lies in the fact that they serve as the most effective proof of the*

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possibility of united action by heretofore divided groups of workers.

These actions were significant not only in the number of workers that were brought together, but even more so in the deep stir which they caused among the workers and in *all workers' organizations*— even in those that were not drawn into the actions. Some comrades have attempted to subtract the membership of the C. P. L. A., the I.W.W., etc., from the total number participating in a given action, and then ask: "What did they add to the united front?" Such an approach may be good mathematics, but it is stupid sectarian politics. In New York, for example, the seven or eight organizations gathered around the centrist C.P.L.A. group (C.P.L.A., Amalgamated Food Workers, I.W.W., etc.) may not have *directly* contributed more than a few hundred workers to the 125,000 who participated in the May Day demonstration. But *indirectly*, the fact that these groups were broken away from the Socialist Party demonstration and that they joined with us in exposing the maneuvers of the S. P. leaders with the police, the S. P. opposition to one united May Day, etc., resulted in the united front demonstration drawing to itself many thousands of workers. The setting up of even such a limited united front in New York, undoubtedly also served to strengthen the desire of the Socialist workers to remain in the square for our demonstration after they had been urged to leave by the S. P. leaders. These "left" reformist groups, though small in themselves, when united with us, served to refute effectively the arguments of the Socialist and A. F. of L. leaders that "a united front with Communists is impossible." Their action—itself resulting from the pressure of the masses—served to stimulate further the discussion of unity, and its realization in all workers' bodies and particularly in the S. P.

The united front, as is admitted by the social fascist leaders, is today a subject of general discussion among the workers. This results from the urgent need for united struggle, in the first place, against Roosevelt's new offensive on the living standards of the masses and, secondly, from the more aggressive steps taken by the Communist Party, and the successes won, even though still relatively slight, in the utilization of the united front tactic. These beginnings can be significant forerunners of a really broad mass movement if our work is correctly developed.

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In this situation the leaders of the Socialist Party are increasing their maneuvers in an effort to block the actual realization of broad united action. The Continental Congress was clearly an effort to counteract the "Free Tom Mooney Congress' and to satisfy the demand of the Socialist workers for "action." The Chicago un-

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employed convention was designed to serve a similar purpose, with the additional desire to set up a new unemployed center in opposition to the Unemployed Councils. The recent calling of Socialist demonstrations and meetings against fascism, against cuts in unemployment relief, etc., show further that these leaders are ready to put on a militant face in an effort to check the leftward trend of the masses.

This is the first new fact then which must be noted: *the Socialist leaders are prepared to greatly increase their activity and even to carry through meetings, conferences and demonstrations of their own, usually on the basis of a "united front" to the right, in an effort to head off the demand of the masses for real action—for united action.*

The real content of their hypocritical talk of a "united front" with the Communists on "specific issues" is also becoming clear. With this formula they propose to send, possibly a speaker or two to a Scottsboro protest meeting or to an anti-war meeting, or take part in some other such harmless (from their viewpoint) action. They do this to make it appear that they are ready to enter into "united action," but they strictly limit such "participation" to a few top leaders. They refuse to sanction, and on the contrary sharply oppose united action by Socialist and Communist workers to rally the masses of the unemployed for struggle at the relief buros; they just as vigorously oppose united action in the factories or trade unions. In other words, they are ready to sponsor an emasculated form of "united action" in order to continue their hold over the Socialist masses, and to actually block the joint struggle of the workers. *They strive to build themselves up before the masses as supporters of united action on what they term "specific issues," in order better to sabotage real united struggle on the basic issues confronting the workers.*

A case in point is the maneuvers both of the "old guard" and of the so-called "militants" of the Socialist Party on the unemployed field in New York. The Unemployed Councils addressed an appeal to all unemployed organizations and to workers' organizations generally for a united struggle at the relief bureaus and at the City Hall against evictions and relief cuts. The Workers Unemployed Leagues, controlled by the "old guard," ignored this appeal. But they immediately called another "united front" conference of their own, *excluding all left organizations*, to take place several days *before* the conference called by the Unemployed Councils. Simultaneously, without waiting for action by their own conference, they announced a date for a demonstration before the City Hall. This open sabotage of united action, as can be seen, was car-

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ried through under cover of a "united front" maneuver—but a united front against the revolutionary workers' bodies.

The Workers Committee on Unemployment, controlled by the "militants," also ignored the appeal of the Unemployed Councils for real united struggle, but they did so with a slightly different maneuver. They called a conference of the four existing unemployed organizations, including the Unemployed Councils, allowing five representatives from each group although the membership of the groups varied from more than 15,000 in the case of the Unemployed Councils (the largest) to not more than five or six hundred in the case of the Association of the Unemployed. There, with a block of 15 representatives against the five of the Unemployed Councils, *they decided against joint struggles at the relief bureaus* which would throw the workers together, but instead were for a city-wide protest of unemployed *only, without the participation of other workers' organizations,* without banners of the various participating organizations, and without the organizations participating *as organizations*—just a loose, amorphous mass of the unemployed. This maneuver of the "militants," discloses what they mean by "negotiations"—also only a united front maneuver to prevent a really militant, effective united stuggle for the workers' day to day needs.

At the same time the Socialist executive continues to maneuver on a national scale. The last meeting of the Executive was held in Washington. It was hastily brought together during the Continental Congress only to block the clearly expressed desire of hundreds of workers there for real united action. The Executive gave out a statement to the press and passed the word to the delegates, declaring that action had been taken to realize a united front with the Communists; they stated that a sub-committee had been appointed to confer with a like committee from the Communist Party. They satisfied the Congress delegates with these statements, and thus prevented a show-down on their sabotaging tactics. That this was a most vicious, lying attempt to deceive the workers, is shown by Norman Thomas' letter to the New York Times, dated May 11th, from which we quote the following:

> "The worst feature of the Associated Press dispatches was what they left out. . . . For instance, the story that the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party had appointed a sub-committee to consider united action *on specific issues* with Communists had no place in the Continental Congress. . . . The sub-committee was empowered to deal with a united front *only on specific issues.* . . . Moreover, *Mayor Hoan of Milwaukee made a motion which sends this entire action to a referendum of the entire membership of the N. E. C.*"

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In other words no committee was appointed to confer with the C. P., not even "on specific issues." They lyingly told the delegates one thing, and then five days after the Congress, Thomas admits that all they decided was to again submit the question to a referendum of the N. E. C.

These examples, by no means complete, show how far these leaders are ready to go, the deceptive maneuvers they are ready to carry through in the frantic effort to block the demand of the masses for a united front of struggle against the bosses. They show that not only the "old guard," but the "militants" as well, desire only to sabotage unity. The "militants," precisely because of their more unprincipled demagogy and "left" phrases, stand even ahead of the "old guard" as the criminal splitters of the workers' ranks.

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While, in the main, the united front tactic has been applied correctly by the Party, thereby forcing the issue of *a united front of struggle* into a central position in the whole working class movement, there have been numerous and serious shortcomings, and also dangerous opportunist errors. These shortcomings and errors—both the right and "left" varieties, as well as the Patry's deep-rooted sectarian tendencies, have seriously hampered the Party in its efforts to take the fullest possible advantage of the present favorable opportunities to create a great mass workers' movement.

The sectarian tendencies—the chief *obstacle* to successful mass work—have shown themselves most clearly in a more or less openly expressed resistance to the united front, on one hand, and in an ill-concealed tendency to get out of any united front at the earliest opportunity, on the other. One frequently hears a sigh of relief after an action is finished; the comrades afflicted with these tendencies are always glad to crawl back into the quiet solitude of their own sectarian shells. In this connection a rigid formalism sometimes serves to conceal (possibly even from the offenders) the sectarian essence of their actions.

In one district, for example, a Socialist branch, convinced of the need for joint struggle, took the initiative in proposing united action to the Communist unit in its locality. Our unit correctly favored accepting this proposal, and wanted to confer with the Socialist branch on the common struggles to be undertaken. But the District Bureau decided, *No*. The Central Committee in its united front directives, they pointed out, had instructed the Communist bodies "to take the initiative in approaching the lower Socialist Party bodies for joint struggle." The District Bureau reasoned, therefore, that at all costs the "initiative" must be taken away from

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the Socialist local. They instructed the Communist unit "*to ignore the offer of the Socialist branch,*" and to send another offer of its own for united action "in order that we retain the initiative." Obviously, the proletarian instincts of the unit members would have done more to give the Communists real initiative in the development of local struggles, than the rigid formalism of the District Bureau which would have made the unit the laughing stock of the workers.

In another district, one of the neighborhood reformist unemployed organizations invited the revolutionary unemployed council there to enter into joint struggle for more relief. The invitation was refused. The reformist local was informed, contrary to our policy, that "we want a united front only on a city-wide scale" —this at a time when we are fighting precisely against limiting our united front efforts to the upper committees of the reformist bodies.

Such examples could be cited from every district, and from almost every section, in varied forms of course, to prove concretely the need for continuous efforts to clarify the Party comrades and to uproot this sectarian resistance to serious mass work.

Sectarian tendencies hamper us most in our efforts to enter into work among the masses on a united front basis, but when we have once entered into such activities the greatest danger arises from mistakes of an openly right opportunist character. Then, in our anxiety to set up a united front, there is the tendency to capitulate to the demands and maneuvers of the reformist leaders, thereby weakening the effectiveness of our efforts to expose these leaders and to destroy the illusions among the masses, created by these leaders, which are the principal barriers to a united front of struggle together with the Communists. In other words, in our over-anxiety to achieve united action, by our own capitulation to reformist influences, we make it more difficult for the masses to find the only road to effective joint struggle—the road which takes the masses over the political corpses of these leaders.

[1] One of the best examples—or shall we say, worst?—of right opportunism can be seen in certain aspects of the Scottsboro case (which on the whole, to the credit of the comrades engaged in that work, was handled well). We refer in particular to the relations with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. For over two years our comrades have correctly emphasized that this organization was the greatest barrier to victory in the fight to save the nine Scottsboro boys and in our efforts to win the Negro masses for joint revolutionary struggle with the white workers against capitalist exploitation and for their own liberation. In the long fight to free these boys the N.A.A.C.P. leaders

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have been guilty of every conceivable act of treachery. They have tried by every foul means to wrest the case out of the hands of the I.L.D. and to liquidate the steadily rising mass protest movement. They have openly appeared as the agents of the Southern lynchers.

During this period they were fought tooth and nail by the revolutionary workers. They were driven out of one position after another. They were exposed and discredited among great masses of the Negro people, but still they brazenly served the white bosses bent on lynching the Scottsboro boys.

Even after the verdict of death was rendered in the Heywood Patterson case, when the entire Negro people was aroused over the verdict, these treacherous misleaders calmly condemned, not the lynchers, but the defense bodies and the boys' attorneys. But immediately they saw that they had misjudged the temper of the Negro people; they saw that the masses stood solidly with the I.L.D. They attempted a right about face. In order to betray the mass movement more effectively, they decided to again get into that movement. They made overtures to the I.L.D., offering to aid in raising funds for the defense under conditions that would give them a veto on all the actions of the I.L.D. And, strange as it may seem, our comrades—those who for two years have led the fight against their treachery—decided to accept these proposals. *Why?—because our comrades wanted "a broad united front"!*

Our comrades thought, apparently, that the united front must include *everybody*. So they sent letters to the N.A.A.C.P. proposing united action *without serious conditions*. They did point out the criminal past of the N.A.A.C.P. leaders, but they "greeted" these leaders for "their *changed* attitude." In one letter *these leaders were even congratulated* for their "effective defense" of Crawford in Massachusetts when everybody knows that Crawford was not extradited to the South only because the masses had been aroused through the Scottsboro case, and because even the jury issue used in the Crawford case had been fought out *alone* by the I.L.D.

And what was the result of all this? The N.A.A.C.P. leaders were brought back into the Scottsboro case by our comrades after two years efforts to drive them out—and all in the sacred name of "the united front!"

This arose from a basic misconception of the united front on the part of these comrades. The united front tactic is not a means of achieving "unity" in the abstract. It is a means of securing unity on the basis of very well-defined principles—*on the basis of the class struggle against capitalism.*

We have repeatedly emphasized the need for *clearly defined demands* in the interests of the workers, and *militant mass struggle*

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for these demands as conditions for united action. Furthermore, we have declared with equal emphasis that the reformist leaders—National reformist leaders in the case of the N.A.A.C.P.—were the agents of the bourgeoisie in the workers' ranks, and that *the influence of these leaders must be destroyed in the course of building up the united fighting front of the masses.* The united *fighting* front can *never* be built up with the aid of leaders of the N. A. A. C. P. type; it must *always* be built up in the course of the struggle against them. The same applies to the Greens, Wolls, Hillquits and Thomases of the American Federation of Labor and the Socialist Party.

But what did our comrades accomplish through this mistaken policy? Superficially, it appeared that they established "a broad united front." Actually, they had weakened themselves in the fight for *a broad united front of the mass movement,* because they had put these treacherous misleaders *in a stronger position* to confuse and demoralize the mass movement. Then there is one final effect of such a policy, namely that *we discredit ourselves* in the eyes of those *most advanced workers* without whose aid no broad mass movement can be successfully built.

Other mistakes of a similar character were made in the efforts of our comrades to build what they thought would be a really broad movement for the defense of these boys (acceptance of Brown as treasurer of the Scottsboro Action Committee at the dictate of known enemies of the movement; a too tolerant attitude toward Davis and the Amsterdam News in the first stages of the movement, etc., etc.). All of these mistakes arose from the failure to see the united front tactic precisely as an instrument with which to destroy the influence of the reformist leaders, and not as a means of making peace with them. Coupled with this was a failure to realize the extent to which the masses had broken with the N.A.A. C.P. and given their support to the I.L.D. and its mass defense policies.

Fortunately, these mistakes, which if persisted in, could only have weakened the struggle for the Scottsboro boys' freedom, are now being corrected. They are emphasized here only so the Party can learn to avoid similar opportunist distortions of the Party line in this and all other phases of its mass work.

Other mistakes of a right opportunist character have been made, and also from the failure to realize that *we desire a united front with the masses on the basis of energetic class struggles for their day to day needs.* Some comrades interpret our policy as one based on a desire for a united front of "tendencies," of "organizations," etc., when what we want is a united front *of the masses* regard-

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less of tendencies or organizations. In the course of the united front struggles it is our aim to win the masses for *one* "tendency" —the revolutionary fighting policies of the Communist International, and for *one* Party—the Communist Party. *Win the masses*, this is our objective in the united front.

Some comrades have interpreted the manifesto of the Communist International as a "new policy" based on a united front with the *leaders*. But this is not correct as can be seen from the following excerpt from that manifesto:

> "The Communist International, in view of fascism which is unchaining all the forces of world reaction against the working-class of Germany, calls upon all Communist Parties to make yet another attempt to set up the united front of struggle with *the Social-Democratic workers through the medium of the Social-Democratic Parties.*"

Here the Comintern policy is very clearly stated: "with the Social-Democratic workers *through the medium* of the Social-Democratic Parties." What we want is "*the united front of struggle with the Social-Democratic workers*" (read also A. F. of L., C.P.L.A., and all other *workers*). This is our objective. All other questions such as "through the medium of the Social-Democratic Parties," etc., are only tactical questions, and should never be permitted to blur over a clear view of our objective in the development of the united front struggles. Above all, such confusion should never cause us to lose sight of the fundamental social-fascist character of the *leadership* of the reformist bodies. And they should not cause us to fall into the renegade chatter about a united front of "tendencies." These conceptions can only serve as brakes on the development of our mass work.

But these opportunist conceptions have influenced our mass work. In some cases the effort to set up the united front "through the medium of the Social-Democratic Parties" and other reformist bodies has caused us to neglect the basic task of winning the masses in the factories, in the trade unions, and at the relief bureaus. This reliance on appeals to *top committees* of the Socialist Party, of the A. F. of L., etc., manifested in some instances, can only be based on the misconception that these bodies, *as such*, will change their basically reformist character and adopt a policy of class struggle. This is a false outlook. As organizations they will remain social-fascist. If they come into the united front, even on a limited number of issues, it will be because they are forced in by the mass pressure for a united front of struggle. Waiting at the door steps then of the social-fascist leaders and neglecting the basic mass work

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would lead to failure all around. It will lead to a weakening of our efforts to win the masses for our policies. It will lead to a relaxation of the mass pressure on these leaders, thereby destroying even the faintest possibility that through these organizations the workers could be won for the united front. The main task, now as ever, is the work in the factories, in the unions and among the unemployed—*directly with the workers*. This is the way *a united front of struggle will be built.*

When the Communist International urges us "*to make yet another attempt*" to win the workers "*through the medium of*" the reformist organizations, it does not do so with the expectation that these reformist bodies (except of course the lower units) will enter a fighting united front. It makes this proposal with the view of calling the bluff of the reformist leaders, with the viewpoint of exposing these treacherous misleaders as the opponents of united action, as the enemies of the workers. In this way, "through the medium of the Social-Democratic Parties" the masses will become convinced of the anti-working class character of these bodies and of their leadership. They will be won for Communist policies, and for the Communist Party.

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The failure to understand that only a united front *of the masses* on the basis of *a fighting class program* really serves the interests of the workers, and that such a united front can only be set up in the course of *relentless political warfare against the social-fascist leadership*, leads to an inability to expose the maneuvers of the social-fascist leaders who sabotage the united front as described earlier in this article and to numerous other right-opportunist errors. Not the least of these is the frequently recurring tendency *to hide the face of the Communist Party and the Young Communist League*. In the May Day demonstration in New York, in an editorial on May Day in the *Daily Worker*, in the activities of the Chicago District around the struggle in the Y.P.S.L., in the agrarian struggles,—in short, universally, there has developed a strong tendency to hide our Communist face, thinking thereby that we are broadening the united front. But here again, such tendencies only serve to blur the class character of the united front and to make it easier for the reformists, through "Communist scares," etc., to confuse the workers and hamper the united front. The Party must clearly be brought forward, in the most effective form, of course, *in every united front struggle*. The masses must be made to realize that it is the Party, and *only* the Party, that really sees their problems through to the

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end, and has a fully worked out program for working class emancipation which the masses can realize *only* under Communist Party leadership.

There is still another point, that of the role of the renegades from Communism—the Lovestoneites, the Trotskyites, etc., in the united front. The conception of a united front of "tendencies," rather than a united front *of the masses*, has opened the door wide for these counter-revolutionary elements, and has given them representation all out of proportion to their insignificant membership and influence. In the Chicago Unemployed Convention, for example, the Lovestonites are given two representatives on the National Committee set up, the Trotskyites one, and the Unemployed Councils two. These two renegade groups with a mere handful of followers are given greater representation than the unemployed council with a nation-wide organization and a registered membership of more than 100,000. But still more important is their political role. Their one aim in every action is to discredit the Communist Party. Their attacks serve only the social-fascist leaders, who use them as instruments to justify their sabotage of the united front by attempting to blame the Communists. And yet these elements are too often unnecessarily tolerated also in the name of "a broad united front." The interests of the masses require relentless war against these sabotagers of united action. They should only be admitted when they come representing *workers*, and then only *in* proportion to the number that they actually represent. In the election of committees the bunk of representation of "tendencies"—the favorite argument of the renegades—must be ignored. *Proletarian democracy* must be made to prevail, with the election of those workers who *by their activities* have won the support of the *majority* of those participating in the joint struggles. By overcoming the opportunist capitaulation to such elements *we will strengthen the fighting front of the masses, and not weaken it.*

Here we have concentrated on the right opportunist mistakes of the past weeks which are the *main danger* particularly now, because, in our efforts to break down our sectarian isolation from the masses—and by no means separated from our sectarianism—we tend to make all sorts of opportunist compromises thinking that in this way we advance our mass influence. This is a false theory. We can make progress only by guarding against all distortions, either right or "left" from a clear Leninist line. Without taking further space in citing concrete examples, it is necessary to warn also against the numerous "left" opportunist tendencies (particularly revolutionary phrase mongering) which still hampers us in winning the

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workers. Sharp struggle against all these tendencies must be waged in the Party.

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All comrades, and particularly the leading comrades, should *study* again the manifesto of the Communist International, the appeal of the Central Committee and the material of the various Plenums and Congresses on the united front tactics and its application. All tendencies to look upon this tactic as a tactic of peace with the reformist leaders must be overcome. This is a weapon which more effectively exposes them, which aids in destroying their influence. The united front tactic is a tactic for winning the masses —*the basic workers of the factories*, in the first place. It is not a substitute for our basic mass work at the factories, in the trade unions and among the unemployed. It merely supplements, and implements this work. Above all the united front must be one of struggle, *of active mass struggles* for the *immediate* and *basic* needs of the masses. If these points are borne in mind fewer mistakes will be made, and the mass movement will go forward more rapidly under Communist leadership.

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The Communist Parties of the Capitalist Countries in the Struggle for the United Front

By O. PIATNITSKY

THE appeal of the Executive Committee of the Communist International to the workers of all countries for the establishment of the "fighting united front of the Communist and Socialist workers" against the offensive of capital and against fascism, which is published in *L'Humanite* of March 5, and in *Pravda* of March 6, has caused considerable confusion in the Socialist Parties and in the Socialist press.

This is not the first time the question of the united front has been raised by the Communist International and its sections. As early as January 1, 1922, the Executive Committee of the Communist International and the Central Council of the Red International of Labor Unions appealed to the working men and women of all countries, proposing the establishment of the united front in the struggle against capitalist offensive. This appeal read in part:

> "The Executive of the Communist International and of the Red Trade Union International have considered the international situation and the situation of the international working class, and have come to the conclusion that this situation demands the union of all the forces of the international proletariat, the establishment of a united front of all the parties of the proletariat, regardless of the differences separating them, if they desire to fight in common for the immediate urgent needs of the working class. . . . The Executive of the Communist International calls the workers of all parties to do all in their power to induce their parties to take part in a common proletarian action. . . . The Communist International demands of all Communist workers, demands of all sincere workers everywhere, in the entire world, in the shop and in the meeting hall, to unite into one family of workers who will stand together against capital in all questions of the day. Create an iron will for proletarian unity on which all attempts to separate the proletariat, will shatter, come they from whatever side they may. Only when you, proletarians in shop and factory, so unite, will all parties which rest upon the proletariat and wish to be heeded by it, be compelled to unite for a common defensive fight against capitalism. Only then will they be forced to break their alliance with the capitalist parties."

After the war, when the revolutionary movement in the de-

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cisive capitalist countries was on the upsurge under the influence of the October revolution, and when proletarian revolution with workers', soldiers' and sailors' councils broke out in the defeated countries—Germany, Austria— the Socialist Parties and the leaders of the reformist unions not only betrayed the workers' interests in order to save the bourgeoisie but also physically exterminated the revolutionary workers and their leaders (Germany). This collaboration of the Socialist parties and the trade union leaders with the bourgeoisie caused tremendous indignation among the workers in these organizations.

In Germany (even during the war), in Austria, Hungary, England, America and all other countries, the revolutionary workers, members of the Socialist parties and reformist trade unions, as well as syndicalists began to establish Communist Parties. The majority of the members of the Independent Socialist Party of Germany, the Socialist Party of France and Socialist Party of Czechoslovakia voted at their Party conventions to join the Communist International. The minorities of these parties, who differed with the conventions' decisions, continued as Socialist parties. In this manner there took place the split of the trade union in France, Czechoslovakia and in other countries. The split of the working class in all countries of the capitalist world occurred as a result of the collaboration of the Socialist Party and the trade union leaders with the bourgeoisie.

In 1921 the bourgeoisie of the major capitalist countries, with the aid of the Socialist Parties and the reformist trade union leaders, had so far recovered from the revolutionary post-war upheavals that it proceeded to nullify the achievements won by the proletariat during this period.

Immediately after the war, during the workers' onslaught against the bourgeoisie, the Socialist parties and trade union bureaucrats who had murdered revolutionary workers and deceived the masses, pretended that they had succeeded in winning from the bourgeoisie the eight-hour day and social legislation (such as unemployment insurance in Germany, England and Austria). Since the social democracy and the trade unions had participated in the struggle for the daily interests of the workers up to the war, the masses of workers did not immediately realize the treacherous role of the Socialists and the trade union bureaucrats during and after the war.

In answer to the call of the Communist International on January 1, 1922, the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals, under pressure of the masses participated in a joint conference with the Communist International on April 19, 1922, on the forms of

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struggle against the capitalist offensive. The agreement reached at this conference was openly broken by the Second and the Two-and-a-Half Internationals. This convinced many workers that the parties of the Second International and the sections of the Amsterdam Trade Union International did not want any united front of struggle against the offensive of the bourgeoisie.

During the relative stabilization of capitalism the Socialist parties and trade union bureaucrats aided in carrying out capitalist rationalization and preparing for military intervention against the Soviet Union. They stood in the forefront of agitation against the Soviet Union and were the bourgeoisie's chief suppliers of the slanderous fabrications which concealed their preparations for intervention.

They drove the Communists and revolutionary workers out of all mass organizations that were under the leadership of social democrats. The teachings of Marx, most fundamental of which are the class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat, were combatted by the Socialists and trade union bureaucrats, who opposed to these teachings collaboration with the bourgeoisie, "industrial democracy" and the theory of "organized capitalism." They tried to make the workers believe that the organization of giant trusts and the fixing of monopoly prices were a way toward the peaceful growth of capitalism into Socialism.

This of course does not prevent them today, when all these theories have been bankrupted by the world economic crisis, from preaching other theories to the workers, diverting them from the class struggle, and to claim that these theories are Marxist theories.

When the crisis began and the capitalists threw millions of proletarians out of jobs, the Second and Amsterdam Internationals hypocritically worked out plans for "struggle" against unemployment, but in actuality they helped the bourgeoisie to reduce unemployment insurance where it did exist (Germany, Austria, England and Czechoslovakia), and where no unemployment insurance existed they obstructed the struggle of the Communist Parties and Red trade unions for the establishment of such insurance.

Under various pretexts the Socialist Parties and trade union bureaucrats aided the bourgeoisie to cut the wages of those workers who still had a job (chiefly under the pretext that wage-cutting would be compensated for by reduction of the prices of food and the necessities of life).

The Socialist Parties and trade union bureaucrats used the same treachery in robbing and crippling the workers' political rights (establishment of martial law, dissolution of revolutionary workers'

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organizations, suppression of the Communist press and of revolutionary workers' organizations, shooting at demonstrations, etc.). Even where the Socialist leaders and trade union bureaucrats, under pressure of the masses, were compelled to lead strikes, they inevitably betrayed them (the big textile strikes in England and France, miners' strikes in America and Belgium, etc.).

But when the strikes were led by Communists, Red trade unions and the trade union opposition, the Socialist Parties and trade union bureaucrats employed the aid of the police to smash the workers' united front in the strike (Berlin traffic strike, November, 1932, Lodz textile workers' strike in Poland, railroad strike in Roumania).

It is obvious that the members of the Red trade unions and revolutionary trade union opposition called upon their followers not only to take part in the strikes called by the reformists, but also to be in the forefront of the strikers' ranks (the general strike and the miners' strike in Great Britain, the 24-hour general strike in March, 1932, and the miners' strike in March, 1933, in Poland, the 24-hour general strike of the Hungarian workers in 1932, and in many other cases).

The Socialist Parties and the reformist trade unions decide on strikes only to prevent their own members and the organized workers, among whom confidence in the Red trade union movement is growing, from leading them. They decide to strike only to be better able to betray the masses in the future. The Communists, however, who know these purposes of the reformists, take part in such strikes all the more actively and are as we know the driving force in these strikes. The Communists are the first to bear the blows of reaction and fascism. This clearly shows the masses who actually carries out the united front.

The hypocrisy of the Socialist Parties and the trade union bureaucrats in the matter of their relationship to the bourgeoisie causes discontent in the ranks of the Socialist Parties and the reformist trade unions. They make intransigent speeches to the workers, but actually support the bourgeois governments in parliament; in words the trade unions are against wage-cutting and reduction of unemployment insurance, but they actually make agreements with the employers and vote in parliament for these cuts. The members of the Socialist Parties and reformist trade unions are participating in increasing numbers in the strikes led by the revolutionary workers and the revolutionary trade union opposition (Berlin traffic strike, miners' strike in Brux and Belgium, textile workers' strike in Poland, and many strikes in Spain).

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The attitude of the members of the reformist trade unions and the Socialist Parties as well as local organizations of the Socialist Parties towards the Amsterdam Anti-War Congress is very significant. As we know, the Second and Amsterdam Internationals were decisively opposed to any participation in the conference. But they were unable to prevent 82 Socialist representatives of workers' organizations from participating. In France 141 local organizations of the Socialist Party endorsed the decisions of the Amsterdam Anti-War Congress, although the Socialist Party leadership threatened these organizations with expulsion.

In Germany the united front of Socialist and Communist workers is primarily established in the streets in the joint struggle against the fascists. But we have also had good examples of the united front in strikes in Germany (Berlin traffic strike).

In England the local organizations of the Independent Labor Party, which have compelled it to leave the Labor Party, are now demanding that it resign from the Second International and join the Communist International. The criticism of the Socialist Party made by the Communists and revolutionary workers has met with a warm response among the members of these organizations. The united front of struggle, including Communists and social democrats, has become stronger in every country. This has forced the Socialist Parties and the Second International to discuss the united front with the Communists.

In many countries the Socialist Party and the Socialist press made demagogic proposals for "the conclusion of a non-aggression pact" between the Socialists and Communists. This press wrote:

> "If the Soviet Government concludes non-aggression pacts with the bourgeois governments, why can't Communists and Social Democrats also conlude such non-aggression pacts?"

In writing this they of course conceal the fact that the Soviet Union concludes pacts for the non-aggression of the imperialist governments against the Soviet Union, thus carrying out its policy of peace, while the Soviet Union itself does not prepare for any attacks upon the bourgeois countries. They also conceal the fact that the press of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union did not undertake to stop its criticism of the bourgeoisie and its agencies in the capitalist countries after the conclusion of the non-aggression pact by the Soviet Government. The Communists cannot but attack the Socialist Parties and trade union bureaucrats when these latter attack the working class and betray its interests. Let the Socialist Parties and trade union bureaucrats only begin a *real* struggle,

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together with the Communists, against fascism and the capitalist offensive, and it will be superfluous to conclude a non-aggression pact, since it will be carried out in practice. But this is just the point—the Socialist Parties want our criticism to cease without carrying out a real struggle against the bourgeoisie.

The Socialist Parties and trade union bureaucrats wrote:

> "The Communists and Socialists form a united army but how can this army fight successfully if the Communists criticize the Socialists?"

In saying this they conceal the fact that in all their activity since the founding of the Communist Party they have incited their "army" against the Communists and prevented it by all means in their power from fighting against the bourgeoisie. The will for unity is very strong among the workers. Many workers may believe that the Communists are doing wrong in not accepting the Socialists' conditions that criticism cease in an hour so difficult for the proletariat, because this is an obstacle to the establishment of the united front. The Socialists make use of these beliefs and make it appear that they want the united front but the Communists do not.

The February 19, 1933, appeal of the Second International says:

> "The dangers are too great to allow that the unanimous desire of the workers for the united struggle of the entire proletariat be used for Party maneuvers. The Labor and Socialist International aims at the united action of the whole working class on the basis of an open and sincere understanding. We call upon the German workers and the workers of all countries to stop these mutual attacks and to fight together against fascism in view of the tragic dangers facing them. The Labor and Socialist International has always been ready to enter into negotiations with the Communist International on such readiness for the fight, since the latter declares itself willing to do so."

But the Second International and its sections do not want a joint fight; they want the Communists to cease exposing them. We need not fear any "criticism" on the part of the Socialist Parties. The Socialist Parties and the Second International want to make the workers "forget what has gone before" and make them believe that the Socialists are ready to turn over a new leaf in history. None the less the Communist International did the right thing when it declared its appeal to the workers of all countries that if two conditions were accepted: the struggle against

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fascism and the struggle against the lowering of the living standards of the workers and the unemployed (see the Appeal of the workers of all countries for the establishment of the fighting united front of Communist and Socialist workers, Points A and B), that it considers it possible "to recommend to the Communist Parties that they refrain from attacks against the Socialist organizations during the period of the common struggle against capitalism and fascism." Here the appeal emphasizes that "the most merciless fight must be waged against all those violating the conditions of the agreement during the carrying out of the united front as against strikebreakers who are smashing the workers' united font" (Appeal of the E. C. C. I., Point C).

The Socialist Parties say: cease criticizing. The Communist International replies: *yes, but only if the Socialists really carry out the conditions of the agreement for concrete struggle, and only for the duration of this struggle.* And the workers will understand this, as is already shown by the fact that the Communist International's appeal has caused confusion in the Socialist Parties. Leon Blum writes in *Populaire* of March 7 (Central Organ of the Socialist Party of France) in an article entitled "Moscow Ignores Zurich":

> "The Labor and Socialist International addressed the Comintern directly and proposed that negotiations be opened as soon as possible. But the appeal of the Communist International is not addressed to the Socialist International; the Comintern's appeal gives no answer at all to the proposals of the Second International. *It does not contain a single word regarding negotiations.*"

The official organ of the Second International's secretariat, "Information International," writes in its issue of March 6th, contradicting Blum:

> "The Communist International's appeal contains a definite reply to the appeal of the Bureau of the Labor and Socialist International dated February 19th."

In this way the Socialist Party of France concealed the real content of the Communist International appeal from its readers and did not even acknowledge what the Secretariat of the Second International cannot deny. How is this to be explained? The only explanation is that the Socialist Party of France must keep from the workers the fact that the Communist Party recommends to its sections the proposing of joint struggle to the Socialist Parties in immediate problems facing the individual countries.

The Socialist press in Czecho-Slovakia clearly indicates what kind of united front of the Communists and Socialist Parties it

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requires. Thus *Pravo Lidu* (Central Organ of the Czecho-Slovakian Socialist Party), in an article written by its editor-in-chief, Josef Stivin, dealing with a proposal made to the Socialist Party in 1920, writes of the establishment of a "permanent Socialist Congress" to consist of representatives of the political and trade union organizations of the working class of all nationalities in the Czecho-Slovak Republic on the basis of the class struggle. This congress is to be the supreme organ and its decisions are to be binding on all. Even now the Socialist Party of Czecho-Slovakia conceives of unity as "unity of joint work, or democratic subordination of the minority to the majority." This means that the Socialist Party of Czecho-Slovakia even now wants the Communist Party to join an organization in which it is in a minority in order to submit to the decisions of the majority. But this would be, not a united front of working-class struggle, but liquidation of the struggle, since the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia would become the prisoner of the Socialist Party and would cease to be the vanguard of the working class in its fight.

The Socialist Party of Switzerland took the same stand on the proposal for the formation of the united front. According to the Basle *Vorwaerts*, the Central Committee of the Swiss Socialist Party ignored the conditions of the Comintern for concrete joint struggle against capitalism and fascism. This fact alone proves their renunciation of the united front. What is more: The Swiss Socialist Party demands the conclusion of a "non-aggression pact" and that the Communist Party submit to "proletarian solidarity," i.e., the ideological subordination of the Communist Party to the Social Democracy, just like the proposal of the Central Organ of the Czecho-Slovakian Socialist Party. It is no accident that the proposals of these two parties of the Second International are identical.

The Vienna *Arbeiter Zeitung*, organ of the Austro-Marxists, on March 7th writes in an article entitled "A Step Forward?":

> "The Communist International's answer comes late—so late that in Germany where the united front would be most urgently necessary it no longer can reach the working-class masses, because the entire working-class press has been suppressed. How different things might be in Germany if this declaration had arrived earlier!"

The Vienna *Arbeiter Zeitung* deliberately keeps from its readers the fact that the Communist Party of Germany, immediately after the elections to the Prussian Diet in April, 1932, made a proposal to the workers' organizations in Germany for a united front against capitalism's offensive. The Socialist Party and the reform-

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ist trade unions made no answer to this proposal. On July 20, 1932, when von Papen expelled the Social Democratic government of Prussia, the Communist Party of Germany proposed to the Socialist Party and A. D. G. B. (German Federation of Labor) that a general strike be called. They answered by declaring that this call for a strike was a "provocation."

The Communist Party of Germany made the same proposal on January 30, 1932, when Hitler was appointed Chancellor of the Reich. The Berlin *Vorwaerts* answered that Hitler had come to power legally and that they must wait to see what he would do. To act now would mean wasting one's ammunition in the air. The Central Committee of the German Communist Party made a proposal to the Socialist Party and A. D. G. B. for joint struggle against the fascists for the third time on March 1, 1933. This proposal went wholly unanswered. Is the Vienna *Arbeiter Zeitung* ignorant of all this? It conceals the truth—it tries to make its readers believe that the Communists are guilty of the crimes of the Socialist Party of Germany.

The Secretariat of the Socialist International, as if afraid that the Socialist Parties might form united fronts with the Communists, finally proposes that they

> "...wait, if at all possible, with negotiations on such Communist proposals in the various countries until the Executive of the Labor and Socialist International has taken a stand on the new platform of the Comintern."

The Socialist press has in practice already indicated its attitude towards unity sufficiently frankly. The Executive of the Second International wants to do this less openly, more subtly; in fact, the renunciation of the united front by the Socialist Parties fits in completely with the plans of the Second International.

In Germany the fascists began to destroy the Communist organizations with the aid of the Socialist chiefs of police. The reformist trade unions and the Socialist Party did nothing to prevent this. Now the bourgeoisie, with the aid of the Storm Troops, is destroying not only the Communist organizations but the Socialist and trade union organizations as well. This is the bourgeoisie's gratitude to its lackeys.

The Socialist Party and trade union leaders want no united working class. They want to keep the workers under their influence through hypocritical statements on unity. But the Socialist Parties will be exposed and the united front of the working class will be established.

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The Class Struggle in the American Countryside

By H. PURO

WIDE-SPREAD struggles have taken place in the American farm communities during the past eight months. The program of action formulated at the Farmers National Relief Conference in Washington, D. C., held last December, has been crystallized and concretized in tremendous mass struggles against foreclosures and for immediate relief under the leadership of the Communist Party and militant farmers' organizations. These struggles have swept the country from one end to the other, from Eastern Pennsylvania to the Pacific Coast, and have echoed in the remotest farm communities of Texas and New Mexico. Hundreds of thousands of toiling farmers have participated in these struggles and achieved many partial victories through their organized mass actions.

SOLIDARITY BETWEEN CITY WORKERS AND FARMERS

During the course of these struggles, solidarity between the farmers and city workers, especially unemployed, has grown tremendously. The need of unity was strongly expressed by the farmers' delegates in the Washington Conference and has received practical application in many sections of the country. In conservative Eastern Pennsylvania, it was expressed by the invitation of the Unemployed Councils of Philadelphia and Allentown for representatives of the farmers' organization to address meetings of the unemployed. More than 500 unemployed paid admission to hear farmers' representatives and gave them a tremendous ovation and pledge of solidarity. This pledge they carried out in concrete action by going in large numbers to assist their farmer comrades to prevent the sheriff sales. Later in Allentown, farmers' delegates, some of whom were deeply religious (Mennonite church members) fought for the seating of Communist delegates in the United Front Conference, when the Socialist leaders wanted to exclude the Communists.

Numerous local and State, joint, hunger marches and presentation of joint demands of workers and farmers, have been carried out during the past months. By these joint actions and struggles, workers and farmers have cemented a strong fighting alliance against their common exploiters and oppressors.

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ORGANIZATIONAL CONSOLIDATION

In the course of these mass struggles, the toiling farmers have made great headway in the organizational consolidation of their power. Numerous local organizations of the left-wing farmers' mass organizations have been established and at the same time many conservative farmers' organizations have been deeply penetrated and united front action committees organized around the joint struggle of all impoverished farmers. These local organizations and their program have been crystallized in State United Front conferences and State-wide actions.

State conferences of farmers on a broad united front basis have been held during the months of February and March in Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota; and a regional conference has taken place in Iowa. The State conference in Nebraska was prepared and led by the Nebraska Farmers' Holiday Association (Madison County Plan), the left wing offspring of the National Holiday Association. All the efforts of Milo Reno and his lieutenants (Parmenter and Crocker) to split the movement by raising the "Red scare" were defeated. A fitting answer to these splitters was given by Jesse Green, until lately a conservative-minded farmer. who said, "If calling for aid from my neighbor and giving aid to my neighbor; if saving people from being thrown out of their homes and saving children from going hungry and ragged is Communism—then they can call me a Communist."

Six thousand farmers marched to the Nebraska State capital, where they were joined by two thousand unemployed workers. A mass meeting was held on the steps of the State Capitol building. The farmers and workers occupied the Senate Chamber, presenting their demands from the speakers' rostrum.

State conferences held in both South and North Dakota were similarly successful and on even a higher level. The following quotation fom the report of the District Organizer pictures the success of the conference:

> "About 120 regularly elected delegates and 80 registered fraternal delegates, besides about 100 individual farmers and representatives of the unemployed workers, were present. The conference was under the direct leadership of Communists. Our program was put over unanimously. On the third day of the conference we marched down to the State House. We marched right in on the floor and up on the speakers' stand waving our banners and singing 'Solidarity.' Our representatives told the Senators and Representatives that we have crawled on our knees and begged long enough. Now we have come together and formulated our own program and we expect you to act. If you fail to act in accordance with our demands, we will take action ourselves."

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Successful united front State conferences have been held in Wisconsin, Ohio and Eastern Pennsylvania (milk conference).

Besides these farmers' State conferences, joint hunger marches and relief conferences have been held in the States of Oregon, Washington, Utah, Montana, Minnesota; in addition to these in other States a considerable number of farmers have participated in hunger marches with the workers, raising their own demands.

PENETRATION OF THE SOUTH

Already before the Washington Conference a good beginning had been made in the work among Southern Negro share croppers, especially in the heart of the Alabama Black Belt but also in Florida among share croppers, tenants and poor farmers and farm laborers. Both of these States were represented in the Washington Conference. Since then intensive work has been done among the Alabama share croppers, where over two thousand Negro share croppers have been organized into the Share Croppers Union, in spite of conditions of extreme terror. In Arkansas we have a good example of what can be done. There a few comrades who came to the Washington Conference in spite of many hardships, have shown a great devotion by creating a State organization among the poor Negro and white farmers and tenants. In Mississippi, New Mexico, Missouri, Texas, Oklahoma, many spontaneous local struggles have taken place and the poor tenants and farmers in these States have shown a great desire for organization and leadership. We have not yet been able to start systematic work in many of these Southern states. However, they must become the most important objective of our agrarian work in the immediate future.

Faced with constant ruin and ever deeper misery, the farmers have plunged into mass struggles as never before in American history. So rapid and swift has been the spreading of the farmers' militant movement, and so deeply have hitherto conservative American farmers been radicalized, that this has taken the bourgeoisie by complete surprise. The first effort of the bourgeoisie to halt this movement was to resort to all kinds of demagogic promises. In this respect Roosevelt, both during and after his election campaign, was especially skilful. He promised relief to the farmers on their mortgages and debt loads. He promised them better prices. He promised to lead them back to prosperity.

And it would be wrong to deny that Roosevelt was able to create strong illusions among the farmers that he would really have something to offer which would relieve their burden and misery. But the hundreds of thousands of farmers were already suffering so much that they could not wait any longer. Pressed on all sides

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by mass struggles for relief and against foreclosures, the bourgeoisie has been compelled to make many concessions in the form of relief. Finally, the bourgeoisie evidently thought that a fake moratorium would be able to halt the mass struggles in the countryside. A moratorium was declared by the leading insurance companies, who own 22 per cent of the farm mortgages, during the month of March. This was followed by passing a moratorium law in several agricultural States. Moratorium laws were passed, for instance, in the States of Iowa and Nebraska. But there were loopholes in these laws. Instead of granting the farmer a two or three year stay on his debts, as provided in Iowa for instance, the granting of foreclosure proceedings was left to the discretion of the judges. In Nebraska it was left in the hands of a State Arbitration Board appointed by the Governor. These officials did not want to stop foreclosures, unless a farmer was able to give a guarantee of his ability to pay. The intention of the bourgeoisie in passing these laws was to make the driving of the farmers from their homes more "orderly," to halt the mass struggle of the toiling farmers.

Our Party pointed out then that this "moratorium" will not help the toiling farmers, and that foreclosures will be carried out by the capitalist State officials more ruthlessly than ever. The correctness of this prophesy has now been clearly demonstrated. Judges and Arbitration Boards, while they have shown leniency towards the big farmers, have under the moratorium laws proceeded to carry out foreclosures against the poor farmers more ruthlessly than ever. Finally, Justice William Darmon Black of the New York State Supreme Court has just ruled that the granting of a moratorium on payment mortgage bonds violates both the Federal and State constitutions and creates "a precedent paralyzing normal business functions."

BOURGEOISIE RESORTS TO BARE FORCE

Seeing that this militant farmers' movement cannot be halted by false promises nor be dispersed by the reformist misleaders of old line farm organizations, the American bourgeoisie has resorted to naked force. Since the revolutionary movement always creates its counterpart, so this militant mass movement of American farmers has aroused the class instincts of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie have become busy developing and organizing a counter-revolutionary movement in the countryside to oppose and fight against the mass movement of farmers. The armed forces of the capitalist State apparatus have been brought out more brazenly as the mass struggles of the farmers have spread. Tear gas bombs and machine guns have been used to disperse the farmers' picket lines, and to carry through sheriff sales. The militant leaders of farmers

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have been arrested and in many cases given long prison sentences—the Tallapposa share-croppers case in the South, Cockrane case in Iowa, Markham farm strikers in Minnesota, Smith and Casper in Michigan, Harry Lux' case in Nebraska.

Simultaneously with using the class forces of the capitalist State, the bourgeoisie has begun to organize kulak elements in the countryside—"Green Tags" in Nebraska, "Law and Order" groups in other prairie States, Ku Klux Klans in the South, etc.

All these phenomena signify very clearly the rapid tempo of the developing class struggles in the countryside. The deepening of the economic crisis both in the industrial and agrarian sphere, bringing great misery to the farms, and growth of the danger of imperialist war, will make more acute the forms of the class struggle in the farm communities.

CLASS BATTLES IN IOWA AND WISCONSIN

The recent extremely sharp struggle in Iowa represents this new state of accelerated struggles in the countryside.

The State of Iowa has again become the scene of a battle between ruined farmers and the bankers and insurance companies, who are ruthlessly foreclosing their farms. This is the fourth time that this richest agricultural State has seen the mass indignation of the farmers rise up against the Wall Street robbers and their agents. In the fall of 1931 the farmers of Iowa took for the first time to militant action against the meat trust, which under the pretense of "tuberculosis test," was slaughtering their cattle wholesale. In this struggle the farmers defied the armed National Guard of the State and forced State officials to modify their fake tuberculin test. Last September the Iowa farmers started a strike against the marketing trusts, who with miserably low prices were robbing these farmers and their families. This strike spread throughout the Middle West and Northwest into twenty-one States, popularizing the strike as a new weapon for the exploited farmers.

From the beginning of the strike, the Communist Party gave it full support, at the same time pointing out that the farmers in Iowa as well as in other States in the United States, were facing foreclosures, and that they must be prepared to organize themselves to wage mass fights against these forced sales.

The program of the Washington Conference emphasized the struggle against foreclosures as a main task. Inspired by the Washington Conference the Iowa farmers began to engage in extremely militant struggles against foreclosures. In Le Mars, for instance, the farmers threatened to hang the agent of the insurance company if he did not agree to postpone a mortgage sale. These mass struggles compelled the State legislature of Iowa to declare a three year

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moratorium on farm mortgages. Farmers thought that this law made all foreclosures illegal.

But it happened, as our Party pointed out then, that the purpose of these "moratoriums" was to halt the mass struggles of the farmers—not to save the farmers, but to save the investments of the bankers and insurance companies from the "penny" auctions carried through by the farmers' mass actions.

Very soon the farmers of Iowa found out that a moratorium law passed by the legislature did not mean anything. Instead of enforcing the moratorium law, the Iowa courts, sheriffs and State agents were still conducting forced sales. Realizing this, the farmers became so aroused that in the very same place (Le Mars), where a couple of months ago they threatened to hang an agent of the insurance company, they now dragged the judge who had granted foreclosures, out of his court, and smeared his face. These farmers maintained that foreclosure sales were unconstitutional and they made some of the deputies kiss an American flag. The farmers around Le Mars are mostly poor tenants and agricultural laborers—another reason for their militancy.

Finding that the civil courts, Sheriffs, State agents and Deputy Sheriffs were no longer able to cope with the situation, the Governor of Iowa, Mr. Herring, brought the National Guard in with martial law and machine guns to collect the debts of the Wall Street bankers and insurance companies. Over a hundred farmers have been arrested by the military officers and dragged to the bull pens and brought up before the military court martials.

Immediately on the heels of the Iowa struggles, 15,000 Wisconsin dairy farmers commenced to wage a most militant strike against the dairy trust. This strike materialized in spite of Milo Reno's betrayal of the farmers' national strike. In Wisconsin we saw on one side the most ruthless utilization of the armed forces of the State against the farmers by a Democratic Governor, and on the other side the most courageous and determined struggle of the farmers—assisted by the workers who came to aid their brothers in the countryside—against thousands of National Guardsmen and deputy sheriffs, armed with machine guns, airplanes and tear gas bombs. Hundreds of striking farmers were arrested and one young farmer was shot by the armed thugs of the National Guard.

The betrayal of the Wisconsin strike by Walter Singlair, President of the Wisconsin Milk Pool, and the role played by the Socialist city administration of Milwaukee, which sent its police against the striking farmers, and on the other hand the fact that the Communist Party and Unemployed Council fought in the first lines

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with the farmers, has helped the farmers to see who are their enemies and who are their friends.

The struggles in Iowa and Wisconsin are the clearest expression of the acute class conflict that is taking place throughout the country between the ruined farmers and their exploiters.

The utilization of armed forces in these two regions of the country, which until a few years ago were considered the most well-to-do farm regions, and where farmers were the most solid bulwark of capitalist society, shows that capitalism is fast losing its support in the countryside. These farmers, who until now have been deeply patriotic and law-abiding, are now learning the class nature of the capitalist State. They are losing their faith in capitalist laws, judges, courts and in the promises of capitalist politicians.

THE SHATTERING OF ILLUSIONS REGARDING ROOSEVELT'S "NEW DEAL"

The arrest and conviction of the militant rank and file leaders of the farmers all over the country, the utilization of National Guardsmen and State Troopers and their machine guns against the farmers to collect the debts of the Wall Street bankers and insurance companies, and the driving of the farmers and their families from their homes under Roosevelt's administration, gives a picture of what the "New Deal" really means to the farmers.

And it is to be expected that just as the militant strike of the Iowa farmers last September was eagerly taken up by the exploited farmers in more than two score of States, as a new weapon in the battle against their exploiters, that these latest struggles in Iowa and Wisconsin which represent a new and higher level of farm struggles, will find a sympathetic echo throughout the country, taking concrete forms in the unqualified support of the fight for the defense of those arrested in Iowa and Wisconsin, and in a new wave of determined struggles.

WHAT HAS MADE FARMERS MILITANT?

There is a concrete economic background for the present militancy of the farmers. Let us take Iowa. The mortgages that darken the future of Iowa farmers today can be traced back to the flush years of 1920 and 1921. After the war period's feverishly expanding markets for food, farm land values soared to high levels. Corn hills in the Iowa prairie sold as high as $500 an acre. Prices of farm products being high, the farmer wanted to utilize this opportunity to expand. He was offered plenty of credit. So he bought an extra forty acres of land, built a new house, and new farm buildings. He thought that with the prevailing prices he could pay off his mortgage within a few years. And in fact, with one

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thousand bushels of corn, he was able to pay off $1,436 of mortgage or interest in 1920. But times have changed. In 1932 one thousand bushels of corn was able to pay off only $120, and a thousand bushels of wheat has fallen in value from $2,443 to $330. A thousand pounds of hogs which in 1920 were worth $133.60, now bring only $29.

Mortgages incurred in the years of 1920-21 began to fall due 1925-26. However, there being plenty of money, the farmers were able to renew these mortgages with somewhat higher interest.

The annual income of the farmers since 1921 has been falling constantly. By 1928 he was beginning to be awakened from his dreams. At the apex of "Coolidge prosperity" he began to clamor for redress and relief, because interest payments and increasing taxation were beginning to break his back. In 1928 thousands of prairie farmers marched to the Republican Party Nomination Convention hall in Kansas City, demanding a hearing. A year or two later, hundreds of thousands of mortgage loans incurred in the fat days of 1920-21 and renewed in 1925-26 began to fall due.

Of the 6,300,000 farms in the country, at least 40 per cent are mortgaged. Foreclosures have been increasing at an estimated rate of 3½% a year. Each year 220,500 more farmers are being reduced from the status of landed proprietors to that of tenantry, a large number of them being reduced to the peasant level or to actual serfdom.

At the same time as the prices of farm products and of land values have dropped catastrophically, the farmers' income has been reduced from $17,000,000,000 in 1919 to $5,000,000,000 in 1932; while taxes have increased 260 per cent.

In the meantime the bankers, insurance companies, and other mortgage holders, are continuing ruthless foreclosures in order to collect their huge debt of $12,000,000,000 and accrued interest. The state officials are doing the same to collect unpaid taxes.

These are the conditions that have made out of the conservative American farmer, the militant fighter, of which the Iowa farmer is a typical example. It has happened, as Marx said regarding the French peasants during the 1848-50 revolutionary period, that:

> "This revolutionizing of the most stationary class comes to the fore most strikingly."

GIVING A REVOLUTIONARY ORIENTATION TO THE FARMER'S MILITANCY

There is plenty of militant fighting spirit amongst the American farmers today. They are ready to fight, and are fighting. It is the task of the revolutionary proletariat to convert this militancy

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of the American farmer into the conscious realization of the necessity of a strong alliance with the revolutionary proletariat. This can be achieved by revolutionary political education of the farmers by our Party, as the Party of the revolutionary proletariat and the leader of *all* the toilers.

The present situation places very great responsibility on our Communist Party. Our Party must give this revolutionary political education to the toiling farmers in the course of struggles. We must convince them that they have no hopes from the Roosevelt government. We must push their demands and struggles constantly to a higher level. We must engage more and more workers and farmers into the joint struggles for the immediate relief, for the cancellation of immense debt loads and taxation burdens and against the class institutions of the capitalist state, that are being used against both workers and farmers.

In the course of these struggles, like those recently waged in Iowa and Wisconsin, we must explain the class nature of the capitalist government and state, pointing out how the state apparatus and state forces are *always* being used for the protection of the exploiters and against the workers' and farmers' interests.

REVOLUTIONARY WAY OUT

Our task is to bring the toiling farmers completely to sever their relations with the capitalist parties, and also with the agents of the capitalists, such as the Socialist Party and Farmer-Labor Party. We must draw them to the side of the Communist Party in the elections. Further, our Party must point out, — only a proletarian revolution supported by the exploited farmers can finally solve the farmers' problems. We must show that one exploiter is not different from the other, neither is one government of exploiters different from another. And therefore every description of exploitation is to be destroyed. We have to educate the American farmer towards the American "October" revolution.

We must popularize Comrade Stalin's speech at the recent Congress of Collective Farm Shock Brigaders, wherein he described the preliminary conditions of Collective Farming, with the following words:

> "Before this mass movement towards the collective farms began, certain preliminary conditions had to be met, for without them the mass collective farming movement, generally speaking, would be impossible.
>
> "First of all the Soviet power had to exist, the power which has helped the peasants, and continues to help them, to turn towards the collective farm. Secondly, the large landowners and capitalists had to be driven away, the factories and the land taken away from them,

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> and these declared to be the property of the people. Thirdly, the kulak class had to be mastered, the machinery and tractors taken away from them. Fourthly, it had to be made known that machinery and tractors might only be used by the poor and middle peasants joining to form collective farms. And finally, the country had to be industrialized, a new tractor manufacturing industry had to be organized, and new factories erected for building agricultural machinery, in order that the collective farmers might be amply supplied with machines and tractors.
>
> "Had these preliminary conditions not been fulfilled, there could have been no thought of that mass transition to collective farming which has commenced three years ago. Hence, in order to adopt the collective farming system, it was necessary to accomplish the October revolution, to overthrow the capitalists and the large landowners and take the factories and the land away from them, and to establish new industries."

Our Party must educate the toiling farmers, who have already in the course of big mass struggles learned their own strength and organized mass power, that only by joining with the revolutionary workers under the leadership of the Communist Party, can they wage an effective struggle for their present-day demands and finally overthrow the system of exploitation,—which is the only way to release them from mortgages, land rents and from overburdened taxation.

THE BUILDING OF THE PARTY IN THE FARM COMMUNITIES

The present situation among the vast masses of toiling farmers is very favorable for our Party. The militant movement of American farmers, although not yet revolutionary, offers very great revolutionary possibilities. When three million farm families, almost half the American farmers, are being robbed of their bare existence, they begin to lose faith in the capitalist system.

The situation requires, therefore, that our Party must become aware of its opportunity, and also of its responsibility, and make itself the real undisputed leader of this vast mass of allies of the American revolutionary proletariat. Until now, the leadership that the Party has given to the mass struggles of farmers, has been (with few exceptions) rather through individual organizers sent by the Party center, than by the Districts and local Party organizations.

In the theses on "Organizational Tasks of the Communist Parties in the Villages" (published in the *International Press Correspondence*, No. 11), the Political Secretariat of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, criticizes the Communist Parties, concerning their work in the villages, in the following manner:

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> "In spite of the favorable conditions which exist, Communist leadership lags behind the revolutionary upsurge of the working strata of the villages. The Communist Parties are particularly lagging behind in the construction and the work of the village nuclei and also in the matter of the formation and leadership of trade unions of agricultural workers, peasant committees in the villages, etc."

In spite of recognized achivements of our Party in leading the tremendous wave of mass struggles of the toiling farmers, this criticism is also fully applicable to our Party.

Let us take the question of the Party nuclei in the farm communities; we must concede that they are very weak and insufficient. In District No. 9 (Minnesota, Northern Wisconsin and Upper Michigan) we have the strongest Party organizations in the farm communities. And it is no accident that just there the first mass struggles against the foreclosures and for immediate relief were started, led by our Party and by the United Farmers League. But even in this District, the work of the village nuclei has not been properly guided by the leading Party committees.

PARTY ORGANIZATION VERY THIN

Outside of District No. 9, we must admit, there exists only a very thin net of farm nuclei. Let us take, for instance, the biggest and second most important district, District No. 10. This district comprises seven agricultural states—Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas. The most militant mass struggles have taken place, again and again, in this district (Iowa, Nebraska, Arkansas). And what have we there, as far as the Party is concerned? In this "empire" of many large agrarian states we have hardly a Party organization to speak of. Yet in Nebraska there is an organization—Nebraska Holiday Association (Madison County Plan)—with a left-wing program, and as many as 25,000-30,000 members. In Iowa we hold a strong influence in the Milo Reno-controlled National Holiday Association and in the recently organized United Farmers of Iowa. In Arkansas with the efforts of a few individual comrades, we have lately developed the basis for a mass movement of small farmers, tenants and share croppers.

In the Southern Black Belt, which is the most important section of our agrarian work, because there the winning over of agrarian masses is to be combined with the important struggle for the liberation of the Negro people, there also the Party organization among the share croppers is still weak.

While it is true that practically in all the cases of farmers' struggles during the recent period, our Party has either led them

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directly or inspired them; these struggles could have become much more powerful, if the respective Party committees had been up to the level of their tasks. Unfortunately the work in the villages both among the farmers, and much more, among the agricultural workers, is considered even by the District Committee, as not very important. Also, the Party has not sufficiently come out openly as the leader of farmers' struggles.

Lately, however, as the mass movement of farmers has developed, there has been a marked improvement in the attitude of the Party organizations towards the work in the villages. Organizational steps have also been taken to hasten the building of the Party. For instance, new sections have been built and old ones strengthened in District No. 10 with the aid of the Party Center, and a basis has been laid to divide this "empire" into at least three separate districts. Also in the South, especially in Alabama, the Party organization is growing among the share-croppers. Nearly all of the Districts have recently had their first experiences in the leading of farmers' struggles, and these experiences have made our District and local Party organizations enthusiastic about this field of work.

But when the militant movement of farmers (with possibilities of even nationwide farmers' strikes) is growing so fast, and when the struggles are becoming so wide-spread and sharp, it is necessary that all leading Party committees (District and Section) assume full responsibility for the work in the villages, in order to be able to lead these farmers' movements. The present thin, and in many districts almost non-existing, net of village nuclei must be manifolded and educated for their task.

In the recent theses, referred to in this article, the Polit-Secretariat of the E.C.C.I. thus sums up the task of the Communist Parties in the villages:

> "The tasks of the sections of the Comintern are to eliminate the existing passivity in this sphere of work and to increase their activity for the formation of more cordial relations between the proletariat and the peasants, to hold joint demonstrations and sympathetic strikes, to organize support by the proletariat for the demands and the struggles of the farmers and vice versa, to organize material support for the arrested workers and farmers, etc."

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The Rise of the Revolutionary Movement in Cuba

By R. MARTINEZ VILLENA

I.

IN THE CARIBBEAN, we find nowhere at the present time a revolutionary movement at a higher level of development or of greater importance than that in Cuba, where recent events and struggles indicate definite gains in the rise of the revolutionary movement, a rise which in the course of its development is spiralling still higher.

The difference in the level reached by the revolutionary movement in Cuba, compared with that which obtains in the other Caribbean countries, is due in great part to the greater intensity and depth with which the world crisis has affected, and is continuing to affect the economy of that country.

Moreover, it is also important to take note of the existence in Cuba, already for many years, of revolutionary working class trade unions which possess great fighting traditions, and follow the line of the Red International of Labor Unions and of the Latin-American Trade Union Federation; and the weakness of the influence enjoyed by the reformist unions in the working class movement compared with the influence that these latter enjoy, for example, in Mexico and Colombia.

It will be necessary for us to show the principal reasons why the economic crisis has weighed so heavily on Cuba, and then go on to point out the most striking characteristics of this process through a dialectical examination of its development. It will especially be necessary to bring out in bold relief the internal contradictions of the imperialist regime in Cuba, not only because of the importance which these contradictions play in any understanding of the economic situation of the country, but also because only by describing and considering these contradictions will we be able to come to a genuine understanding of the political events now taking place in Cuba, of the maneuvers of the government and of the bourgeois-landlord opposition, of the respective connections of these two distinct groups with the industrialists and financiers of the United States as well as with the government in Washington. Only by considering these contradictions can we also obtain a clear view

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of the perspectives that now present themselves to the revolutionary movement of the masses. The first part of the article is devoted to these ends.

The second part of the article will deal with the rise of the revolutionary movement in Cuba—a rise basically motivated by the economic crisis—and in it we will try particularly to explain the most salient factors responsible for the revolutionary upsurge, giving particular attention to the strike of the workers in the sugar industry which is now taking place—this being without any kind of doubt the most important of the struggles of the Cuban masses against imperialism.

The crisis has led rapidly to the complete ruin of the two major industries of Cuba, tobacco and sugar, particularly of the latter. The importance of the bankruptcy of the sugar industry to the general economic situation of the country finds no parallel in any other country, even in those Caribbean countries whose economics are based on the culture of one raw product only. That is to say, there is no other country in the Caribbean, the economic situation of which is so completely determined by one given crop as is the Cuban economy by sugar. This has been shown in the most emphatic way both during the period of the so-called "dance of the millions" (the years 1918 down to the first half of 1920), and during the time of bankruptcies and unexampled poverty which came as a result of the violent fall in prices and of the speculation that took place in the second half of 1920. It is still manifest in the present situation of complete collapse of the whole economic structure of the country; and in the general misery of the people, which intensifies in proportion as the crisis in the sugar industry continues to get worse and worse.

To any discussion of the place which the sugar industry holds in Cuba, as the very ground and basis of the whole economy of the country, it must be added that, in comparison with the slump that has taken place in other products that play dominant roles in the mono-cultural economies of other Caribbean countries (coffee and bananas, for example), the sugar crisis in Cuba has shown almost from the beginning a different characteristic: namely, that, together with the fall in prices, there came a decrease in the acreage of production, due to the measures of restriction which were put into practice by the Machado government and by the sugar barons in their search for a way out of the crisis (the restrictions of the sugar harvest since 1927, and the Chadbourne Plan). This decrease in production has carried with it the automatic dismissal of thousands of workers from the plantations and from

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industry, a fact which in Cuba has had particularly serious results in intensifying and further extending unemployment.

Moreover, the general crisis in the sugar industry (overproduction, and the fall in prices) has been intensified in Cuba by virtue of a third factor: namely, the struggle between the American beet and cane sugar interests, who manufacture their sugar within the tariff-protected frontiers of the United States (in the U. S. itself, Porto Rico, the Philippines, Hawaii), and the cane-sugar manufacturers in Cuba, who are also for the most part Americans but whose products, considered as foreign, have to pay tax to the United States custom authorities. Analogous contradictions in the camp of imperialists exercising control over the fundamental products of a country, do not exist in any other centers of American imperialist rule in Latin America, except in the case—in Guatemala and Honduras—of the struggles between the Cuyamel Fruit Company and the United Fruit Company, struggles which sometimes take the form of open war-like actions across the frontiers.

The conflict between the two rival groups of sugar manufacturers in Cuba, each fighting for a larger share of the American market for their respective products, has a definite connection with the raising of the United States tariff against Cuban sugar, thereby aggravating the crisis in the sugar industry and, consequently, the economic crisis in the whole of the country.

The ferocious offensive against the working class and against the poor and middle peasants has been redoubled, with the purpose of transferring onto the backs of these classes the whole weight, and all of the consequences, of this crisis. The object of the Cuban sugar barons is to force down their costs of production practically to zero point.

The successive restrictions of the sugar harvest made under the Chadbourne Plan—itself a reflection of these internal contradictions, and a maneuver to achieve the impossible and pay back the American bank credits out of the blood of the peoplpe—have reduced the sugar production of Cuba from 5,000,000 tons in 1929 (the only free harvest since 1927) to only 2,000,000 tons at the present time. Forty per cent of the working force in the principal industries are now unemployed. The wages bill in the sugar industry has decreased by 50 per cent since 1929, and for industry as a whole, the decrease since July, 1931, has been 40 per cent.

This catastrophic decline in the purchasing power of the masses has reduced imports to almost inconceivably low figures, and not only the balance of trade, but also the international balance of payments, shows an enormous deficit. Thus the government, whose

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principal source of income is from customs dues, will be faced in the very near future with complete bankruptcy.

Drastic reductions in the budget, at the expense of thousands of state employees, and a vicious fiscal attack on all fronts to tear away from the masses, by means of new taxes, enough money to pay the service of the foreign debt—these will be the measures adopted by the government—and these measures, which are the results of the crisis, will further aggravate the crisis, with each step bringing new sections of the population under the yoke.

As a consequence of all this, the contradictions which exist in the camp of the bourgeoisie, the feudalistic landowners and the imperialists have been further accentuated. The most important of these contradictions are as follows: the contradictions within American capitalism itself between the two rival groups of sugar manufacturers; the contradiction between the American cane sugar manufacturers in Cuba, large enterprises that posses sugar refineries in the United States which allow them to get around the tariffs by refining their sugar within the United States, and those American or Cuban manufacturers who have no connections with refineries and thus, finding themselves at a differential disadvantage, have begun a struggle against the refineries in the United States and for a native refining industry in Cuba; the contradiction between the sugar planters and the large millowners in the struggle to divide up the profit on each bag of sugar; the contradiction between the American exporters from Cuba and the American sugar manufacturers, which is responsible both for the fall in the figures of Cuban imports as well as for the raising of Cuban tariffs against certain products manufactured in the United States; the contradiction which undoubtedly exists between these American exporters situated in Cuba and the particular section of the Cuban bourgeoisie who are, through their dependence on the banks, placed in the position of the Cuban servants of American imperialism.

Along with the accentuation of these main internal contradictions it is necessary to point out that the basic conflict between the exploiters and the oppressed masses has also become more acute. Only by giving to this main contradiction its due weight can we obtain even an approximate picture of the economic situation under the influence of which the sharpening class struggle and the powerful and growing revolutionary movement is developing in Cuba.

The main problem for the imperialist rulers of Cuba is not the struggle against the national bourgeoisie, which it would of necessity vanquish, since even if the main body of the national bourgeoisie is not directly linked to the imperialist interests, it is, as we have said above, too weak to give political expression to its

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instinctive movements of resistance to American finance capital. Nor, is the problem one, as it is in the majority of the Latin-American countries, of struggle against a rival imperialism which disputes the booty, for in fact, the struggle against English imperialism—which began on the diplomatic field about the middle of the last century—was decided in the second and third decades of the 20th century in favor of American imperialism on the battlefield of capital investment and trade statistics. Between 1913 and 1926 American investments in Cuba increased by 1300 per cent, while English investments increased by only 7 per cent.

The principal problems for American imperialism in Cuba are those produced by its own internal difficulties, which are the difficulties of a regime of exploitation and domination which has based its strength on almost exclusive penetration into basic sectors of the national economy and which has come to be unbearable for the masses, at the very same time that it begins to show signs of internal decomposition. This problem has placed concretely before American imperialism in Cuba two questions: first, how to reconquer, neutralize or minimize those elements within itself that are developing in a sense contrary to itself, not however as independent elements opposing the advance of imperialism but—what is much more serious—as parts of that very same conjuncture of imperialist forces which is disintegrating as the internal contradictions grow stronger; and, secondly, how to maintain its rule over the oppressed and exploited masses and forcibly carry out a pacification of the proletariat and of the poor peasantry who, followed by sections of the small city bourgeoisie and middle peasantry, are engaged under the leadership of the Communist Party in a growing struggle against the present bourgeois feudal imperialist rule of assassination and hunger.

Taking into account all the facts previously mentioned, it is possible to state categorically that Cuba at present constitutes the weakest link in the chain of Caribbean imperialism.

II.

The beginnings of a definite rise in the revolutionary movement in Cuba can be dated from the last quarter of 1929, a period in which the radicalization of the working masses was shown by an avalanche of strikes, local and partial, which we can characterize as an offensive movement, culminating under the direction of the C. N. O. C. (National Confederation of Cuban Workers) and of the Communist Party, in the great political general strike of March 20, 1930, and in the formidable May First demonstrations of that year. From then on the working class movement has

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maintained a generally rising curve of development and is embarked on the road of open mass struggle against the imperialist and bloody Machado government, a struggle into which other sections of the population are also entering. The events which later marked this period of the rise of the revolutionary movement were the following: the entrance of the Cuban petty bourgeoisie into the struggle, a participation characterized by the students' struggles commencing September 30, 1930; the armed uprising of the bourgeois opposition in August, 1931, and the later development of the terrorist campaign of the A. B. C. At the present time a whole series of events indicate in Cuba that the struggle is rising to a higher plane. The principal event which marks and characterizes this new period is the organized strike movement of the sugar workers (a strike which has extended to six of the sugar provinces). This movement was prepared for and is being led by the C. N. O. C. and by the Communist Party.

Other factors that characterize this phase of the revolutionary rise are firstly, the carrying out by the Party (during the period November to January) of four campaigns of a national character —the election campaign for the first of November, the hunger march of December 24th, the Mella commemoration of the 10th of January and the Lenin commemoration of the 21st of the same month. In spite of the defects and errors which we made in the preparation and carrying out of the campaigns, the extent and national character of the mobilization obtained was enormous, particularly if we take into account the relatively brief period in which they were carried through, and the open appearance of the Party as organizer under conditions of extreme terror. All the demonstrations clashed with police forces and with the army, resulting in many comrades wounded and some being killed. The funerals of the working class victims in Matanzas, in Santa Clara, transformed themselves into new spontaneous demonstrations of a Communist character.

Second, a renewal of the strike movement, which had declined very seriously as a result of the outlawing of the Red Trade Union organizations. Textile workers, shoe workers, cigar workers, transport workers and agricultual workers in the tobacco fields, have entered into strike struggles in different cities. This new wave of strikes received a tremendous impetus with the strike in the sugar mills.

Thirdly, the increase in the membership and in the influence of the Communist Party among the workers, among the poor peasants and other sections of the population. In the province of

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Santa Clara the Party increased its strength six times since the November elections.

Fourth, the transformation of the terrorist association, A. B. C., into a national reformist political party, and, fifthly, the latest maneuvers of the bourgeois opposition.

Let us now turn to an explanation of what in our judgment are the most important features of the strike of the workers in the sugar plantations and in the sugar industry. We will examine these characteristics on the basis of information which we have before us, materials which are certainly incomplete, but are first hand, and which in spite of their brevity—they are "news from the battle-front"—picture for us in the most complete way the heroism of the Cuban proletariat and of the valiant Communist Party of Cuba.

The strike in the sugar mills is an event of the greatest political importance for Cuba at the present time, because it is a genuinely revolutionary movement of the mases against imperialism. Many non-Marxian elements, although sympathetic with the revolutionary movement in Cuba, seem incapable of estimating the political importance of this strike precisely because its special significance eludes them, the more easily if their minds are stunned by the reverberation of the exploding bombs of the A. B. C. But what importance can we give in politics to actions, however brave or violent they be, which come from one or from ten men, as compared with the coordinated actions of hundreds and thousands of men, actions that possess in even greater degree the qualities of heroism and strength? What significance can we give in politics to the destruction effected by one or by a hundred bombs, even if they shatter the marble walls of the Capitol or wreck the cupola of the Presidential Palace as compared with the effect produced by these thousands of workers in the sugar industry, that is to say, in the very heart of the citadel of imperialism?

Basically, politics is concerned with masses. It is not a question of individuals. Basically in Cuba it is a question of oppression and of imperialist exploitation. When the Cuban masses launch a revolutionary struggle against imperialism, this fact overshadows all others. It is for this reason that the strike in the sugar mills presents the most eloquent reply to the arguments of all the enemies of the Cuban revolution, that is, to all the enemies of the people, from Machado, through the theoreticians of the A. B. C. and of the bourgeois-landlord opposition, all the way to the renegades from the Communist Party. In the face of this trike struggle in the sugar mills all the "Messiahs" and the programs of "salvation" of the professional bourgeois politicians now droop sadly and

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lifelessly like wet rags on a line; and all the clamor of the bursting bombs—and bombs by themselves have never overthrown a government in the whole of history—are not worth the scream of a single sugar mill siren calling the workers back, after a sucessful strike, to work; and Sandalio Junco's speech on "passivity," in which he says that "in Cuba, all strikes are condemned in advance to futility" looks even more ridiculous than the prophecy of Machado when he promised his masters in Washington that under his rule "no strike in Cuba would last for more than 24 hours."

Let us now see what are the characteristics which give to this movement such a transcendent political importance over other events that have taken place in the country. The main characteristics are:

IT IS A MOVEMENT ORGANIZED BY THE C. N. O. C. AND BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The movement was organized by a national conference of workers in the sugar industry held in Santa Clara on the 26th and 27th of December, 1932, with representation from 32 sugar mills in all the six provinces, under the auspices and guidance of the C. N. O. C., together with the support of the Communist Party and other revolutionary organizations. We are not dealing therefore with a spontaneous movement, though the revolutionary spontaneity of the masses has played, and is playing, an important role.

IT IS A MASS STRUGGLE DIRECTED BY THE MASSES

From the information that we possess we calculate that not less than 20,000 workers are taking part in this movement. The strike has been prepared through regional conferences and committees of struggle, and is being directed by strike committees formed in each sugar mill. The leadership of the strike is in the hands of the masses themselves and all the committees have a mass character. Vacillating elements have been excluded from the direction of the strike.

IT IS A UNITED FRONT OF THE AGRICULTURAL WORKERS WITH THE WORKERS IN THE MILLS

As the movement developed, the workers organized themselves into the National Union of Sugar Industry Workers (S. N. O. I. A.). In struggle, as in organization, the industrial and agricultural workers have united together. The facts have shown that the organization of both groups in the sugar industry into one union is not only possible but indispensable, and facts have also shown that the most perfect organizational schemes have turned out to be simply dead letters when brought face to face with the living reality of the necessities of the struggle.

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UNITY OF BLACK AND WHITE, OF NATIVE AND FOREIGN-BORN

In the strike in the great sugar mills, as in the demonstrations in the cities and generally in the struggle for immediate demands, a complete unity of action has been established between the white and black workers. This has been especially notable in the provinces of Santa Clara and Oriente, where the ruling classes have practiced the greatest discrimination. Also the theories which the reformists share with the anarchists that the Jamaican and Haitian workers are responsible for the miserable conditions of the sugar workers in Cuba has been once more exposed as a lie by the active participation of these foreign-born workers in the common fight. A group of Jamaican workers brought to the "Habana" sugar mill to work there with the object of breaking the strike, demanded their tools and, as soon as these were given them, unanimously voted to go on strike.

UNITY BETWEEN THE WORKERS AND PEASANTS

The base has also been laid for a solid united front between the poor and middle peasants and the workers in the sugar mills and plantations. Many planters have shown themselves to be decidedly on the side of the workers. Working class leaders in flight from the police have often found refuge and a hiding place in the huts of the peasants. In the Las Villas district the peasants donated 25 thousand pounds of vegetables for the strikers and their families. In another village (Manicaragua) a peasant assembly took place at which more than 400 workers were also present, where it was decided by the peasants that they would refuse to pay taxes. Many Regional Peasant Leagues are being organized with the assistance of the workers.

THE GROWTH OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The influence of the C. P. is growing among the workers and peasants as a consequence of the strike. In many places the Communist Party has become semi-legal, since the authorities find it almost impossible to suppress all the sympathizers of the Party. In the province of Santa Clara the number of Party members has increased sixfold in four months. In two of the sugar mills belonging to one of the largest imperialist concerns (Armour's) enormous red flags with the sickle and hammer were hoisted above the factories.

FRATERNIZATION WITH THE ARMY

In several places, soldiers have refused to fire on the workers. Officers, frightened by the militancy of the masses, and no longer certain as to the trustworthiness of their men, have hesitated to

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give orders to shoot. In some villages where searches have been made for the illegal literature of the Communists and the C.N.O.C., the search has had to be made by the captain in person, while the soldiers themselves were confined to barracks for fear that if they were not they would forewarn the villagers of the impending inquisition. The influence of the revolutionary movement is infiltrating among the soldiers and gaining strength in the army of Machado.

The forms of struggle now being adopted by the masses in this strike are raising the fight to a level where already it is taking on the forms of an armed insurrection. Here are some examples. The agitation for the strike was carried out not only in the mills, but also in the neighboring towns, and the strike demands were written up not only on the factory walls, but also on the telegraph posts, on the highways, on the railroad cars, and on the walls of the houses. This work was accomplished by armed patrols, who frequently opened fire on the municipal police, scaring them away when they tried to interrupt the strikers. In one village the workers' patrol arrested the Mayor and the telegraph operator, placing them under guard until the patrol was through with its work. In a sugar mill, the private police of the employers imprisoned the workers in the factory at the beginning of the strike in the plantations and forced them to grind the cane that had already been cut, but the agricultural workers took over the mill and set free their comrades. This mill was in the possession of the workers for several days. Self-defence groups were formed, and mass pickets fought the strike-breakers. These latter were a veritable armed militia, who scoured the country-side and were active in spreading the strike to other plantations. In other places, these groups, which by their number, social composition and organizations were the embryo of a workers' and peasants' red guard, were victorious in many encounters with government troops.

Thus the strike has developed forms of struggle which are patently those of armed insurrection, a fact which bears out concretely Comrade Sinani's statement that in relation precisely "to the conditions of semi-slavery which obtain in the cane plantations of Cuba, to the denial of workers' rights, and with the possibility open to the employers of physically annihilating the instigators of the least expression of discontent" that "in these conditions there is no other means or method of struggle open to the workers except open armed insurrection—since peaceful strikes, under a slave system, are excluded."

We have painted in the main lines of the picture which the strike struggle in the sugar mills presents to us. We are, it is under-

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stood, far from suggesting that the characteristics which we have pointed out above are to be found in all the sugar mills affected by the strike, or can be encountered in all of the other mills in the same degree of intensity. The data which we have before us refers principally to sugar mills in the province of Santa Clara. But nevertheles the facts we have mentioned have their importance as signs of the rising revolutionary movement. These facts are definite and they indicate at the very least a series of partial victories in this movement. Later, with more complete information, will come the time to make an analysis of the defects and errors which we have committed during this conflict and to extract from it lessons for the future.

The enormous importance of these facts mentioned above lies in the possibilities that they will be extended to the whole working class movement, that they will become strengthened and more permanent as they lose the character of ephemeral phenomena accompanying this particular strike, as they will become widened and finally impregnate the whole revolutionary movement, bringing into existence the main prerequisites of a revolutionary situation in Cuba. Already potentially present in the revolutionary movement of the sugar workers, are the embryonic forms of the coming revolutionary situation. Without these prerequisites the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution will not be able to march forward in Cuba on the path of victory.

* * *

American imperialism, caught in the trap of its own contradictions, is looking for a solution to the problems which its internal contradictions, as well as the rise of the revolutionary movement, place before it. Meanwhile imperialism, the exploiter and oppressor —represented in Cuba today by Machado and yesterday or tomorrow by some other man of iron—is trying to find a capitalist way out of the crisis; while the exploited and oppressed masses, under the leadership of the Party of the proletariat, are seeking the revotionary solution. But, every move of the imperialists is foredoomed to carry with it its own negation.

The strike of the sugar workers in Cuba carries with it the message of greater struggles. The red flags hoisted in the silence of dark night upon the factory chimneys of the Armour Company sugar mills, herald the raising of those other red banners which will float in the glare of the sunlight over all the factories of the whole sugar industry.

Eyes that are young today will not yet have grown old when they look upon this marvel.

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The Scottsboro Struggle and the Next Steps

RESOLUTION OF THE POLITICAL BUREAU

THE death verdict against Heywood Patterson in the Scottsboro case, followed by the powerful rise in the mass movement including the great mass march to Washington, marked a most important change in the political level of the Negro liberation movement.

The most profound effects have been wrought upon the lives of the Negro masses by the four years of economic crisis, accompanied by the bourgeois offensive which includes a general sharpening of national oppression of Negroes, an unparalleled wave of lynchings, police murders and summary legal "frame-ups." In the southern countryside, the economic robbery and consequently the class relations between rural bourgeoisie and Negro and white toilers have been extremely sharpened as a result of of the frightful economic ruin. Events have laid the historical ground for the entrance of the Negro masses into the political struggles of the United States for the first time as an active political force *independent of bourgeois political parties.*

It is in the logic of this situation that the Negro proletarians as a mass are beginning aggressively to fight for the position of leadership within the Negro movement, as against the Negro bourgeoisie. Parallel to this and directly connected with the economic ruin of Southern agriculture is the decisive development of the proletarian and semi-proletarian agrarian masses, the agricultural laborers, sharecroppers, and small impoverished landowners, who for the first time in organized forms begin to fight against economic robbery and political repressions. And nationwide ties are already being formed between the city and country proletarian movements of Negroes.

The dissatisfaction of Negro city proletarians, and also of a large section of the Negro petty bourgeoisie and intelligentzia, with the Negro bourgeois leadership, which on the one hand, is interested in exploiting the Negro masses (small commerce, segregated real estate, etc.), and on the other hand works in close connivance with the white bourgeoisie in supporting imperialist policies—is beginning to break op old political alliances and to give the present wide upsurge of the Negroes the character of a broad peoples' movement against national oppression. But at the same time these

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discontented petty bourgeois elements become the base of newly stimulated activity of reformist groups. Only with *the beginnings* of Negro proletarian hegemony within the national liberation struggle (and this hegemony will be attained only under Communist Party leadership) does this movement enter *the first stages* of effective mass struggle for equal rights and the right of self-determination.

In order for the revolutionary movement among the Negro proletariat to gather strength and to begin the struggle for hegemony, there was first necessary a bold beginning in carrying out the correct Leninist line on the Negro question, as a national question.

The aggressive taking up of the issue of the Scottsboro case by the Communist Party, which connected this case with the whole struggle against Negro national oppression, supplied in the Spring of 1931 the necessary link with which it has become possible to draw forth a great chain of rapidly developing struggles. The challenge to white capitalist and landlord rule that is embodied in the Scottsboro case with the bringing out of all phases of national oppression, disenfranchisement, Jim Crow jury system, rural peonage, etc., is becoming the unifying symbol for a great mass movement.

In the industrial centers the movement for the defense of constitutional rights of Negroes and of struggle for equal rights is, under the influence of the Scottsboro campaign, for the first time in history passing from the leadership of white and Negro bourgeois elements *into the hands of revolutionary proletarians* and the Communist Party. The growing *unity of Negro and white city workers* in struggle for the common needs of Negro and white proletarians, but also and particularly for the special demands of the Negroes against *national* oppression, is a special mark of the past two years and is directly due to the line of the Communist Party on the Negro question. On the Scottsboro issue the Communist Party has been able to set in motion a larger number of *white workers* than had ever before appeared on the scene of battle for the rights of Negroes and this in turn has led to the largest actions of white and Negro masses struggling together for their *common economic needs* than had previously ever been known.

Thus by placing the whole question of the rights of the Negro people (equal rights, right of self-determination) before the masses as being inextricably involved in the Scottsboro frame-up, and connecting this closely with the economic struggles especially of the sharecroppers in the South, the Communist Party is making serious

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beginnings toward carrying out the correct Leninist line on the national question, and thereby facilitating the raising of the whole struggle to a higher plane.

On the basis of two years work of the Party along this correct main line, despite some serious errors and lapses from consistent, energetic work, the masses were given a certain preparation for a correct appraisal of the second lynch verdict at Decatur, Ala.

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The mass movement has reached its highest expression up to the present time in the sharp struggles of the *Alabama share croppers*, in the *unemployment struggles* of Negro and white workers in Chicago, Cleveland, New York, etc., and in the "*Free the Scottsboro boys March*" of four thousand Negro and white workers to Washington, in which new masses of Negro and white toilers, which had heretofore remained inactive under reformist influence, were set in motion.

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The demand for the march on Washington arose directly from the masses as the inevitable outgrowth of the Party campaign, though it was immediately picked up by "left" reformist groups and by the bourgeois politicians of the Amsterdam News in an effort to liquidate it. The Communist Party reacting immediately to this demand of the masses, came forward as leaders and organizers of the march by clearly formulating a concrete program of action in correspondence with the new level reached by the mass movement, establishing the proper united front forms to carry this program into effect. By this step the Party at once saved this movement from sizzling out into harmless petition signing and declarations, as was attempted by the reformist groups, the Party firmly establishing its own leadership among the masses.

The Scottsboro march to Washington has created the deepest concern in the ranks of the ruling class, and has brought a series of demagogic maneuvers on the part of Negro and white spokesmen of the bourgeoisie to destroy the aims of the mass movement, and to minimize and limit its objectives with the aim of throttling the rapidly crystallizing movement against national oppression. So-called civil rights bills presented in the state legislatures of New York and Connecticut and the bill presented by Congressmen De Priest and Fish to Congress on the right of change of venue, are such demagogic gestures. At the same time the revolutionary campaign of mass action in defense of the Scottsboro boys is directly responsible for the dismissal of extradition proceedings against the Negro, Crawford, in Massachusetts and the raising of the question

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of exclusion of Negroes from juries at the students' inter-racial conference in Texas.

The Bill of Rights, borne to Washington by the Free the Scottsboro boys marchers, expressed the broad social and political issues already raised in the Scottsboro movement and confronted the democratic Roosevelt administration squarely with the demand to enforce the Constitutional amendments guaranteeing the democratic rights of the Negro people which have been a dead letter since Reconstruction. The march further served to compromise and expose the democratic party, which enjoys a peculiar hegemony in the South and one of whose principal political tenets lies in the support of the lynch law system.

Realizing that the march indicated the highest level yet attained by the mass movement directly connected with the defense of the Scottsboro victims, the forces of reaction quickly mobilized in an attempt to smash the march and so to strike a heavy blow at the mass movement as a whole. The first line of defense of the interests of the bourgeoisie and landlords in the struggles directly influenced by the Scottsboro case (including Alabama share croppers and the unemployed struggles) has been and is occupied by the bureaucracy of the N.A.A.C.P., composed of white bourgeois and Negro bourgeois-nationalist, as well as a sprinkling of social-reformist leaders. The main battles to protect the lives of the nine innocent Negro boys, the lives and interests of Alabama share croppers and the interests of the unemployed in centers of Negro population are necessarily fought in the first place against this corrupt group of leaders; it is necessary to set in motion masses of Negroes which, traditionally under their influence, are held chained by them to support of the system of imperialist oppression. Any judgment of success in these campaigns, therefore, must center around questions of winning the masses to action against the opposition of these forces, and *in action* (while conducting an ideological struggle) winning these masses from their influence.

Inasmuch as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People leaders had been partly discredited in the eyes of the masses as a result of the systematic exposure of their treachery by the Party and the International Labor Defense, and was, for the moment, to a large extent rendered insufficient for its role of deceiving the masses, the white ruling class and their reformist allies attempted to set up a so-called new non-partisan committee, excluding the revolutionary forces. In this manner they sought to stifle the movement and divert it into harmless channels. The leading role in this was played by the Democrats, particularly Tammany Hall, working however with and often through the Negro

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reformists, socialists, etc., in pursuit of their aim to isolate the International Labor Defense and the revolutionary forces from the movement, in order to behead it. In New York, this movement for a new "defense" committee seized upon the person of a lawyer of the defense, in an attempt to use his popularity to wrest the defense from the I. L. D.

In this the Amsterdam News, Negro newspaper published in Harlem, played a most insidious role. This group in order to disrupt the march and rob it of its militant character, pretended support of the International Labor Defense before the Patterson verdict, indulged in "left" criticism of the N.A.A.C.P. while in actuality following its disruptive line, attempted to seize the leadership of the developing mass movement by first picking up the slogan of the mass march, but only for the purpose of substituting for it a handpicked delegation of "representative" citizens to present a petition to the president.

Despite the concerted drive of the reactionary forces to allay the indignation of the masses and misdirect the purpose of the movement, the Party was able firmly to take over the leadership of the movement, and to give it a uniform aim and direction, crystallizing mass action not yet attained in the previous two-year development of the struggle.

In this situation a correctly-applied policy of the united front for Negro rights became the decisive thing. In the course of the development of the movement, in the preparation of and in the march itself, the line of the Party of the united front from below and exposure of the vacillations and betrayals of the reformist leadership was in the main carried through correctly. This despite the fact that serious opportunist mistakes were committed—right opportunist mistakes in the direction of capitulation to the reformists and insufficient exposure of their maneuvers, as well as "left" distortions of the united front policy in the direction of narrowing down the united front, etc.

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Right opportunism was manifested most crassly in the agreement offered by the International Labor Defense and accepted by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People following the Heywood Patterson verdict, through which the N. A. A.C.P. burocracy was given authority to appear before the masses as defenders of the Scottsboro boys, although in fact they were continuing in a slightly more concealed form their actions of sabotage against the defense which included slanderous attacks against the I.L.D. Before the I.L.D. made this mistake as to the kind of agreement that could be made and the manner of making it, the

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leadership of the N.A.A.C.P. was already to a great extent exposed in its betrayal of the Scottsboro boys, and the seething mass movement, together with disaffection within its own ranks (participation of numerous branches in the united front and in demonstrations, St. Louis, etc.) had compelled the N.A.A.C.P. leaders partially to rescind their vicious statement against the I.L.D. and the Communists. However, the mistaken manner of entering into the agreement, and mistaken terms of the agreement (failure to compel a clear-cut, positive stand for the defense and guarantees of participation in mass struggle, repudiation of sabotage acts, etc.) tended to re-establish the reputation of the N.A.A.C.P. leaders as "sincerely" and "trustworthily" participating on behalf of the defense, and placed a weapon in the hands of these misleaders to use against the united front movement and particularly against the march to Washington, thus jeopardizing the whole defense of the boys. This is clearly shown by the speeches of Walter White, Miss Ovington, Dubois, etc., in Pittsburgh, Atlanta, Birmingham and other cities as well as by the attacks against the march on the part of the *Pittsburgh Courier* which is the unofficial organ of the N.A.A.C.P. leaders.

In a number of places this attack (which had been made possible or at least greatly strengthened by the mistake of the I.L.D.) had the effect of crippling the campaign and the I.L.D. itself.

The I.L.D. should have handled the situation in a quite different way. Already the masses were showing their rejection of the policies of the N.A.A.C.P. leadership and of the line of the organization as dictated by them, and were expressing their adherence to the policies of mass defense. The masses were showing this by rallying to the united front movement initiated by the I.L.D. and the Party. Therefore, at such a time and under such circumstances, when the misleaders of the N.A.A.C.P. came foward with false offers of co-operation, which we knew could have only the purpose of again placing themselves in a better position to fight against us, it was necessary to place before these leaders such clear-cut proposals for mass struggle on behalf of the Scottsboro boys as would have compelled a further clarification of the whole situation and of the falsity of their position. An agreement offered at such a time to such misleaders should have been such a straightforward and clear proposal of mass struggle and of mobilization of the masses against the capitalist frame-up courts and the Jim-Crow legal system as would have compelled these misleaders, if they accepted it, to take a position that would have amounted to a public repudiation of their past (and present and future) actions in support of the lynch courts and the ruling class Jim-Crow system of national oppression. (On the other

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hand, if they had refused such an offer, this also would have cleared the issues before the eyes of the masses.) Such a course would have served to isolate these enemies of the Negro masses from the mass movement.

But the agreement that was entered into was not of such a nature as to expose the falsity of these leaders (it was of such nature as to accept these leaders, not with the repudiation of their past policies of betrayal of the movement, but along with a continuation of their past policies.) The error that was made in the agreement itself was further accentuated by a statement of the I.L.D. of April 14, 1933 and released to the press under the caption "I.L.D. Accepts Offer of N.A.A.C.P. Co-operation on Scottsboro," in which the I.L.D. expressed itself as "ready to accept the offer of the N.A.A.C.P. to co-operate in the raising of funds" under conditions set down by the misleaders of the N.A.A.C.P. calculated to cover over and conceal the fact that funds previously raised by these misleaders in the name of the Scottsboro defense had been used in a savage struggle against the Scottsboro boys and against mass support of their defense, and against even the claim of their innocence.

The dangerous opportunist nature of the mistake was made more glaring by a letter of the I.L.D. to the N.A.A.C.P. leaders expressing "appreciation" of the decision of the N.A.A.C.P. to aid in the financial campaign and admiration for the "excellent legal defense work of the N.A.A.C.P. in the Crawford case in Boston, where, in fact, the N.A.A.C.P. leaders were already again showing that the aim of their work was, not to win freedom for the framed-up Negro, Crawford, but to effect a compromise that would, at the risk of Crawford's life, preserve the prestige of the Virginia lynch courts. Other incidents, such as the failure, at the united front conference of April 16, to expose the fact that the N.A.A.C.P. leadership refused to support the march to Washington, tended to show that the I.L.D. was slipping into a whole series of opportunist mistakes in relation to the most dangerous enemies of the Negro libeartion movement. Mistakes of the same character were made in orientating ourselves too much upon the leaders of organizations, churches, etc., failure sufficiently to involve the masses, failure to take full advantage of the favorable objective conditions to build a real movement of the masses, particularly to build the I.L.D., etc. In a number of situations the I.L.D. failed to place publicly before the reformist leaders the elementary terms of the united front and to insist that they either support the struggle program or lay themselves open to exposure before the masses; for example the acceptance into the united front of the organized group which demanded the acceptance of the Reverend

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Brown as treasurer on their own terms, and the failure to go over the heads of these leaders to reach the masses behind them and draw these into the struggle. A certain playing up of a bourgeois attorney as the "hero" of the trial by the *Daily Worker* and by the I.L.D. press material, reflecting the influence of publicity about this attorney in the bourgeois press (although the error was followed by sound criticism), played into the hands of the bourgeoisie and of the bourgeois political parties that were speculating on the popularity of the Scottsboro issue.

These right errors show a strong influence within the Party of liberal movements which "also support" the struggles of the Negro masses at such times of rising militancy; they are the result of a low level of theoretical development and particularly of an underestimation of the radicalization of the masses and of the movement of the masses toward our revolutionary leadership, and the failure to realize the extent to which the Scottsboro struggle has penetrated and won support among the broad masses.

Many of the serious errors made at this time were "left" distortions of the Party line in the process of the united front action. There was on the part of many comrades a failure to understand the popular national revolutionary significance of the movement around Scottsboro, and consequently these comrades did not understand the need of drawing in all sections of the Negro population *willing to struggle* around this specific issue in the development of the broadest united front action. Such comrades, therefore, failed to see the importance of the role of the National Scottsboro Action Committee, and could not see that in this situation not alone the building of the I.L.D. as a united front organization itself, but also the drawing in of many more elements which could not be drawn into the I.L.D., is absolutely necessary to set in motion the broadest possible masses for this action. Many comrades failed to differentiate between the dishonest misleaders on the one hand and on the other hand the honest and sincere elements who were willing to struggle in this movement against capitalist national oppression and which can be drawn closer to the revolutionary movement. In some cases the comrades tried to make up for the absence of political exposure by means of noisy name-calling (the Garveyite leaders and Davis of the *Amsterdam News*), and refused to permit representatives of definite and important groups to speak from the united front platform in support of the mass struggles (Garveyites). The injection of anti-religious issues into the united front by our comrades showed a "leftist" failure to understand the Leninist policy of overcoming the religious prejudices of the masses.

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These opportunist mistakes, both right and left, which reveal themselves in the course of the struggle are evidence of the Party's still continued immaturity on the national question, and of the deep-rooted sectarianism which exists in the Party which, if persisted in, would lead to further isolation of the Party from the masses. While in the development of this movement we have succeeded in breaking to some extent the isolation of the Party, sectarianism still persists and constitutes an obstacle in developing of the movement. *The future development of the movement demands a relentless struggle against the lack of Leninist clarity on the national question, and against sectarianism on the basis of a merciless struggle against the right danger as the main danger as well as against "left" opportunism.*

The carrying through of mass struggles in the field of Negro work demands a clear estimation of the class role of the many and varying elements and groups operating in this field. It is necessary to differentiate between elements definitely connected with the capitalist political parties, acting as the conscious agents and spokesmen among the Negro masses of the interests of the big imperialist bourgeoisie of the United States, and whose outward support of such movements as that of Scottsboro are directed solely to maintain the influence of these capitalist and social fascist parties, and those honest and sincere elements, on the other hand, who are confused and therefore subject to mistakes under the influence of the demagogy of such parties, but which sincerely desire to fight for the national liberation of the Negro people and can be won to fight on definite immediate issues genuinely against capitalism, although not yet fully conscious of the implications of the national revolutionary struggle of the Negro people.

In such a broad mass struggle as that of Scottsboro conscious agents of the ruling bourgeoisie endeavor to come into the united front for the purpose of smashing the mass movement and thus serving the bourgeoisie. Having influence among great masses of the population that must be drawn into the united front struggle, they seek to ride into positions of power within the united front organization in order there to create disruption and to divert and defeat the movement. To defeat such agents of the enemy within the camp, becomes the most imperative necessity. But this cannot at all times be done merely by decreeing that such persons cannot enter the movement when they are still able to convince masses of their support of the struggle. It is necessary to reach these masses and to draw them into the united front, even where such misleaders, still retaining their hold upon the masses, are included within the united front. But it is necessary at all times clearly to place the issues and to

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place the conditions of the united front action, elementary struggle directed against the ruling class, as will weaken the influence of such agents of the bourgeoisie and draw the masses into action despite them. It is necessary especially under conditions of united front struggle where such elements are active, to warn the masses constantly of the class role of these elements, the real essence of their actions from day to day, and to expose all hesitations and waverings of such elements that are under their influence. Under all conditions it is necessary to maintain the independent role of the Party and of the revolutionary forces in such a united front both in regard to our agitation and our actions.

The Decatur verdict brought out with special sharpness the isolation of the Party from the Negro masses. It revealed that the Party was unaware of the depths to which the Scottsboro issue had penetrated among the broad masses of Negro people. Legalistic illusions of a possible turn in favor of "justice" had already gained growth within the Party, based on exposures purely within the court room and at a time when the mass work was obviously sagging. Despite the fact that the stir among Negroes was nation-wide, only a few districts suceeded in promptly reacting to the issue and giving leadership to the development of the movement. In such important centers as Chicago, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Cleveland where important actions had been carried through in the past which involved large sections of the Negro masses, the Party did not sufficiently react to the Scottsboro issue and take full advantage of the objective possibilities for crystallizing a powerful mass movement in these centers. Even in the districts where this movement was given leadership (New York, Philadelphia, Charlotte) our activities were confined in the main only to Negro territories. There was insufficient mobilization even of the revolutionary mass organizations, let alone the mobilization of new sections of white toilers in support of the Scottsboro struggle. The membership of the Party failed sufficiently to put into practice the C. I. directive to make it the duty of the white comrades to march at the head of the struggles for Negro rights. This fact accounts for the relatively small number of white workers that were involved in the preparatory activity (mass meetings, demonstrations) prior to the march and in the march itself. This still reflects the fact that we have not yet succeeded in taking the proper steps to acquaint the white workers generally, and particularly those workers in the mass organizations under the leadership of the Party, with the relation between the struggle for Negro rights and the struggle for their own demands. This further reveals the insufficient struggle against white chau-

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vinism, the underestimation of the Negro question in our own ranks and among the broad masses of white toilers.

The Party almost entirely failed to see and utilize the opportunity to reach and mobilize the Negro masses in connection with the Free Tom Mooney Congress, to the detriment of both the Mooney Congress and the Scottsboro Campaign. Another serious fault was the failure to raise the Scottsboro issue in connection with the Continental Congress. The failure to raise this issue, and to mobilize the masses upon it, in the anti-Hitler demonstration, was a serious blunder.

There was the failure on the part of the Party fractions to take advantage of the militancy of the Negroes in the mass organizations to break down white chauvinism among the workers and mobilize the white workers in support of Negro rights. As a result of the failure to mobilize the revolutionary mass organizations, particularly the red trade unions, behind the Scottsboro struggle, the Party was unable to take advantage of the mass ferment among Negro toilers to broaden out and deepen the struggle around the Scottsboro issue by initiating and developing mass actions for the specific local demands of Negroes arising out of the Jim Crowism.

The Party fraction in the I.L.D. and the I.L.D. generally did not utilize to the fullest extent the given situation and the spontaneous response of the Negro masses to the I.L.D. for more intensified organizational work. The independent position of the Party and the I.L.D. in the struggle was not at all times made clear, both in agitation and in mass actions (insufficient I.L.D. leaflets, insufficient mass meetings called directly by the I.L.D.).

There was unclarity as to the relations between the I.L.D. and the action committees and the role of the I.L.D. in these action committees. The action committees are not yet the expression of the broadest united front movement in support of the Scottsboro—I.L.D. campaign. These weaknesses are to a large extent due to lack of systematic Communist fraction activities in the united front.

The Harlem Liberator did not sufficiently utilize the situation to come forward as the agitator and organizer of the struggle around Scottsboro and for Negro rights, as one of the most powerful instruments in our hands in the struggle. While in Harlem large masses of Negroes were in motion in preparation for the Scottsboro march and there was a growing resentment against the Negro reformist leaders and bourgeois politicians, the Party and I.L.D., and the *Liberator* itself, failed to build up its apparatus for distribution, sales and subscriptions and in this manner to enlarge the basis of the paper. One of the reasons for the narrow distribution of the *Liberator* lies in the still existing narrow content of the

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paper. The *Liberator* still does not sufficiently reflect the struggles of the Negro masses.

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The Scottsboro march and the demonstrations that preceded and followed the march, must be viewed as the point of departure for the development of a still wider movement embracing larger masses of Negroes and white toilers. We will succeed in this only if the Party fractions and the I.L.D. as a whole will overcome the weakness pointed out above.

The immediate tasks before us are:

1. With a wider and better popularization of the issues and events of the campaign, such as the march to Washington, it is necessary for the Party, both directly and through the mass organizations, the trade unions, T.U.U.L. fractions, etc., to begin at once intense agitation around the Bill of Rights in closest connection with the Scottsboro case. The signature drive must be intensified for a million signatures. Mass pressure must be exerted to compel bourgeois and reformist Congressmen, Senators and public officials everywhere to expose themselves by forcing them to take a stand on the Scottsboro case and the Bill of Civic Rights.

2. We must immediately initiate and develop direct struggles for the immediate issues raised in the Bill of Rights. A campaign for mass violation by Negro and white workers jointly of Jim Crow laws and customs must be undertaken in all localities. Organizations must be systematically approached to put themselves and their leaders on record for or against this campaign of action, and to participate as organizations in mass picketing of Jim Crow institutions, etc. It is likewise necessary to link up more definitely the struggle for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys with the fight for the freedom of Angelo Herndon, shore croppers, Euel Lee, etc., and with the campaign for the freedom of class was prisoners, generally.

The united front must be broadened out; more energetic steps must be taken to reach the masses in the reformist organizations from below; committees of action around the Scottsboro issue and the Bill of Rights muse be set up in all localities as well as in factories, schools, etc. It is necessary to continue and strengthen the organization of mass actions around these issues in the form of meetings, parades, delegations, mass picketing, elected delegations to public officials, etc., and in the course of the movement to develop higher forms of struggle, protest strikes in schools, factories, etc.

Hand in hand with our agitational work, the struggle against the reformists and the development of mass struggle on concrete issues through the united front from below, all steps must be taken to recruit large masses of Negro and white toilers into the I.L.D.

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and drawing the best and most conscious elements of these into the Party.

The immediate objective of the Party is: To bring into existence and to organize a broad united mass struggle against national oppression, for equal rights and the right of self-determination. The Party policy is: To draw into action together, through direct approach to the masses, various mass organizations of Negroes and whites, forming a united front on the basis of a definite, though elementary series of demands to be agreed upon by the organizations. The perspective is: Through such action to influence the participating mass organizations to affiliate themselves voluntarily in a permanent association such as the League of Struggle for Negro Rights.

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The Political Connections of the International Armament Firms

By JAN RELLING

WHEN the Soviet government recently accused five British engineers, employees of the Metropolitan-Vickers Co., Ltd., of collecting military secrets, it specifically refrained from drawing into the picture the firm employing the accused, much less the British government. Yet the "National" (Tory) government of Great Britain, after heatedly denying that it had subsidized spying on the U. S. S. R., issued two "white papers" dealing with the trial before the verdict had even been brought in.

Was this zeal to influence the outcome of the trial due to the usual hostility of capitalist governments to the workers' republic? Or was there some deeper, hidden reason? Specifically, did His Majesty's government want to come to the aid of Metro-Vickers? What is the significance for the workers of the relations between governments on the one hand and munition firms on the other?

First, a word as to the Vickers group of companies. A continuous history can be traced back to 1790, but the firm acquired international importance only after 1892, when it acquired interests in other firms notably William Beardmore, and especially after the acquisition of the Barrow shipyards and the Maxim-Nordenfeldt Guns & Ammunition Co., in 1897. From that time until the great war, Sir Basil Zaharoff, who came into the company with Maxim-Nordenfeldt, was its dominating figure. He held shares in the French firm of Schneider-Creusot and in ten other British armament firms including Armstrong-Whitworth, then the biggest munition firm.

After the war the munitions firms which had rolled up huge surpluses readjusted their capital, and in 1927 the armament, steel and shipbuilding interests of Vickers united with Armstrong-Whitworth to form Vickers-Armstrongs. This firm is probably the leading armament firm in the world, though its political influence is perhaps less than that of Schneider-Creusot. Even so, it is just one subsidiary of Vickers, Ltd., which includes firms for the production not only of armaments and war and merchant ships, but of airplanes, railway rolling stock, machines of all descriptions, and, through the English Steel Corporation (which is controlled jointly

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with Cammell-Laird) a full line of iron and steel products. The profits of Vickers, Ltd., amounted to £529,038 in 1932.

The Metropolitan-Vickers Electrical Co., Ltd., is part of the same group as Vickers, Ltd. General the Right Hon. Sir Herbert A. Lawrence, G. C. B., Chairman of Metro-Vickers, also sits on the board of Vickers, Ltd. Metro-Vickers is a subsidiary of Associated Electrical Industries, Ltd., in which Vickers, Ltd., holds a large interest. The consolidated assets of the Associated Electrical Industries amounted to over fourteen million pounds on December 31, 1931.

The Vickers group has close relations with the J. P. Morgan interests of the United States. Linked with Vickers, Ltd., through the fact that both own stock in the Associated Electrical Industries is the International General Electric Co., Ltd., the international holding company of the American General Electric Company, a Morgan firm. Vivian H. Smith, a partner of Morgan, Grenfell & Co. (J. P. Morgan & Co.'s British branch), sits on the board of Associated Electrical Industries. There is also a tie-up between the Vickers group and the Morgan group by way of the Sun Life Assurance Society, which has had unusually close relations with Vickers, Ltd. Grenfell, Morgan's London partner, is a director of the Sun Life Assurance Society.

The armament firms are naturally on the best of terms with the British imperialist government, which placed orders for navy contract work totalling over five million pounds in 1932 alone. Five out of eight of the directors of Vickers, Ltd., are former military men who retain their British military titles and are in close relation with former associates in the government service.

In France, the government boasts quite openly that it helps the big metal and munitions firms. The munitions business of France is dominated by the firm of Schneider-Creusot. Recently this firm had a large sum owing from the Hungarian government which the latter was unable to pay. The French government secretly advanced to Hungary the money with which to pay off the Schneider loan.

The Schneider firm dominates the munitions industry of the Little Entente. Before the war one of the greatest munitions works of central Europe was the Skoda plant at Plzen (Pilsen). After the war this plant was in Czechoslovakian territory while the head office of the firm remained in Vienna. With the full approval of the Czechoslovak government, the bank group Union Européenne, which Schneider dominates, bought up the Skoda works for 100 million depreciated Czechoslovak crowns. The plant is now worth probably 200 million. The Schneider group has disposed of a large block of shares in Skoda, but its influence in the firm is still strong.

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Schneider also controls the huge Czechoslovak mining and metallurgical concern known as the Berg- und Huettenwerks-Gesellschaft, with headquarters at Prague. The Union Européenne (Schneider) is probably the largest shareholder in the Austrian bank known as the Nieder-Oesterreichische Escompte-Gesellschaft, which has connections with the great Alpin-Montan works, formerly under German control.

Schneider also holds part ownership in the most important magnesite works in Austria, which are important for the heavy industry of all countries including the United States. The Nieder-Oesterreichische Escompte-Gesellschaft (Schneider) participated in the founding of the Chrissoveloni Bank in Bucharest, and Schneider influence in the Reschitza Iron Works, the most important plant of its kind in Rumania, has been rumored but not confirmed. In Poland, Schneider dominates the Huta Bankowa Steel Works in Dabrowa, and quite recently when a Polish government loan was proposed to finance a railroad through the corridor from the Upper Silesian coal fields to the sea, Schneider strongly supported the idea. The loan was floated in France, and the railroad is being built by a mixed company in which Schneider joins with the Polish government. A similar railroad order was obtained for Schneider in Latvia about the same time and on much the same basis.

In its negotiations with the governments of the Little Entente and with other governments which have sought to float loans in the French market, the French government has traditionally worked hand and glove with Schneider. If the loan was for armament purposes, the country seeking it could have it listed on the French stock exchange only if it placed its order with Schneider. Since the war France has been a greater capital market than ever, and government connections have been of correspondingly greater importance to this big French munitions firm.

The Schneider firm is obviously very close to the French government and helps in the shaping of its imperialist policies. If we go back to pre-war days, we can find similar examples of munitions firms in other countries influencing government policy, both directly and indirectly. There is the famous case of Mulliner, who explained to the British cabinet how Germany had secretly been building warships—a story made up out of whole cloth, but which obtained such wide acceptance that the cabinet placed an order for several new warships and thereby brought business to Mr. Mulliner's firm, the Coventry Ordnance Co. There is the firm of Krupp, which was favored by Imperial Germany nearly as openly as the French government favored Schneider. Krupp has since abandoned the open manufacture of armaments, but in 1927 it acquired shares

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in the Swedish Bofors Ordnance and Dry-dock Co., which operates under Krupp patents. Krupp also has connections with armament firms in the Netherlands.

The most important armament firm in the United States is the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, which absorbed the Midvale Steel & Ordnance Co. in 1922. This company has made vigorous attempts recently to extend its political influence, both directly and through the political activities of the American Iron & Steel Institute, of which Charles M. Schwab is chief executive officer. The Jones-White merchant marine bill of 1927, which was openly backed as a means to make the United States "independent" of other nations in time of war, was directly due to the efforts of a $50,000 lobby, to which Bethlehem was a heavy contributor.

It is perfectly evident that armament and munition firms have influenced the foreign policy of capitalist governments and are doing so to an increasing extent as the imperialist world prepares for another world slaughter. Some bourgeois writers have built up a whole theory of war and peace on the basis of the connection between war and profits. Thus Otto Lehmann-Russbueldt in his book *Die Blutige Internationale* (1929: translated as *War for Profits*) urges, "Suppress all war exports and prohibit profits in the armament industry! . . . If the war business came to an end, war would end too!" In his latest book, *Die Revolution des Friedens* (*The Revolution of Peace*), published in 1932, he argues that the reason why heavy-industry firms favor the building up of huge armaments which can be used only for war is that the rate of profit is higher on goods used for war than for goods like locomotives and kettles. "If heavy industry made more on railroad material and pots and pans than on dreadnoughts and machine-guns, it would praise pacifism through its press instead of condemning peace as devitalizing, and would prove that there was nothing more beautiful in life than to go on trips and eat a lot." Capitalism, according to Lehmann-Russbueldt, might be as much of a factor for preventing wars as it now is for causing them!

A good test of this argument is furnished by the policy of the French heavy industry of Lorraine since the war. If we consider only the last six or seven years, we seem to have a brilliant confirmation of Lehmann-Russbueldt's theory. The *Comité des Forges* and the *Union des Industries Métallurgiques et Minières* have followed a policy of reconciliation. The understandings between French and German heavy industrialists, which have led them to work together in the Saar and in some Lorraine firms, as for example the Dreux family and the Roechling family worked together almost right through the war, were extended to include all the im-

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portant heavy industry firms on the German side, and all the important French firms except Schneider-Creusot. One might almost have imagined, when the International Steel Cartel was set up in 1926 that the magnates had read Norman Angell's *The Great Illusion*, and decided that the peace was after all more profitable than war, and set out to divide the world's markets on a pacific basis. Only the irreconcilable munitions firm of Schneider remained chauvinistic.

Unfortunately for this beautiful theory, it was only three years before the formation of the Steel Cartel that the French army had occupied the Ruhr in order to force the German heavy industrialists to do the bidding of the *Comité des Forges*. The Steel Cartel itself has already broken down, after its terms had been fundamentally modified on several different occasions. The plain fact is that there is no stability in the international relations of firms in any private business whatever. As Lenin pointed out in *Imperialism: The Last Stage of Capitalism* (1916):

> There can be no other conceivable basis, under capitalism, for the partitioning of spheres of influence, of interests, of colonies, etc., than a calculation of the *strength* of the participants, their general economic, financial, military strength, etc. And strength among them is constantly varying, for there cannot be, under capitalism, an *equal* development of different undertakings, trusts, branches of industry or countries. . . . When the alignments of forces are modified, where, *under capitalism*, can the solution of contradictions be found, if not in the resort to force? (Vanguard ed., pp. 99, 79. Emphasis in original.)

It is thus perfectly plain that the abolition of war profits, even if it were conceivable in an economy where governments are dominated by munition firms, would solve nothing because it would not in itself remove the main cause of war, the basically conflicting interests of the imperialists. Under the regime of monopolistic capitalism, this conflict is real and cannot be waved aside by talk of a "free competition" which has vanished and a "harmony of interests" which never did exist. Since the forces inherent in capitalism are continually driving imperialist nations into war with each other, a war which is only temporarily postponed by diplomatic bargaining, the abolition of private profit in armaments and the nationalization of munition-making—advocated frequently by Socialist Party leaders—would merely mean that the imperialist nations would put that much more money into building armaments.

But who do these pacifists think are going to nationalize the manufacture of munitions? The Schneiders and Krupps and Charles M. Schwabs? Or their friends the Social-Democrats, the Noskes and Zoergiebels who turn the government's guns on the

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workers? Really these Lehmann-Russbueldt pacifists are too naive. It is not the pacifism of a Norman Thomas that will ever nationalize a munitions industry. The present tendency is in the other direction; the British Tories who cry out so loudly against revision of the Versailles Treaty are quite ready to abrogate that article of the treaty which prohibits Krupp's from making munitions, and the British government has even presented to the "disarmament" conference a "draft disarmament treaty" which provides for such abrogation.

This act of the British carried out under the protecting wing of the former pacifist MacDonald, was not primarily due to the international solidarity of the munitions firms. As C. K. Streit, the *New York Times* correspondent at Geneva pointed out, resumption of munition-making by Krupp's—

> ". . . would in turn facilitate domestic sales of the same articles by Vickers, Schneider's, Skoda, and other members of the international armament ring while stimulating foreign business. . . ."

The *Times* puts "international armament ring" in quotation marks. However its correspondent well knows that there is an international armament ring. He even wrote a book about it once. Before the war the ring centered around the Harvey Steel Co., formed for controlling certain patents essential to the manufacture of armaments. This firm went to pieces and has not been revived; but the international connections of the armament and munition firms are still very numerous. The famous Hotchkiss machine gun is made by a French firm having an American president and using some English capital. Vickers and the Japanese firm of Mitsui joined in founding the Nippon Steel Works in Japan. Vickers has branches in the Balkans, and Vickers and Schneider are in contact through the Ottoman Bank. Wright airplane engines, used for both civil and military aviation, are made not only in the U. S. A. (by the Curtiss-Wright Corporation) but also in Poland and Japan. The International Chemical Industries, Ltd., which controls the whole civil and military chemical industry of Great Britain, has innumerable links with E. I. DuPont de Nemours & Co. in the United States and the huge I. G. Farbenindustrie of Germany, which also has an understanding with the French chemical firm of Kuhlmann. The Nobel international dynamite trust of which the principal firm is the Société Centrale de Dynamite in Paris has survived the war with some modifications and is still presided over by Paul Clemenceau, brother of France's war premier Georges Clemenceau. Many other examples of international connections in the metallurgical and chemical war industries have been industriously collected by Louis Launay and Jean Sennac, who

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however totally misunderstand the significance of their material. (See *Les Relations Internationales des Industries de Guerre*, Paris 1932.)

It goes without saying that the power behind these firms making the materials of war is the financial power, operating through certain well-defined banks and firms. Sometimes these banks were formed by the industrial firms and sometimes the firms were started by the banks, while perhaps typically the banks and the firms were started separately and came together later. The Bethlehem Steel Corporation is linked with the National City Bank of New York and with J. P. Morgan & Co., and even more closely with a Morgan bank, the Guaranty Trust Co. The Schneider bank, the Union Parisienne, has already been mentioned. This is the holding company for many of Schneider's Central European enterprises. The Banque des Pays du Nord, which was the traditional bank of heavy industry in French Lorraine, was acquired in 1929 by Schneider. In every such instance, whatever was the initiating force, the tendency has been for the financial interest to gain in influence with the passage of the years at the expense of the industrial.

The great munition firms and their financial backers are more combined and centralized, and at the same time more international in their scope, today than ever before. They are in a position to make and unmake international alliances. And this "black international" of war material manufacturers cooperates with every effort of the imperialists to hold up the development of industry and the building of Socialism in the Soviet Union. They work overtime to prepare for the coming armed attack of the capitalist world against the only country where workers and farmers rule. The workers of the world must be on their guard against these plots of the imperialists. They must, the world over, forge an iron chain which will link them with the workers' republic and defeat the imperialist designs of the war-makers.

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The Transition to Communism—The Opportunism of the German Social Democracy

INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW EDITION OF THE *CRITIQUE OF THE GOTHA PROGRAMME* BY KARL MARX

By MARX-ENGELS-LENIN INSTITUTE

The Critique of the Gotha Programme ranks with the *Manifesto of the Communst Party* as the most important of Marx' programmatic works. It provided in condensed form the main theoretical basis for the program of the Party of the proletariat in a number of countries.

In this work Marx devotes a very great deal of attention to the questions of the transition period, Socialism and Communism, and it has special importance for us at the present time. Just at this moment, when this transition is being realized in actual fact under the dectatorship of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R., Marx' scientific forecasts assume special significance; they acquire the character of practical directives which are being applied directly to life. Now that in the struggle against the desperate resistance of the bourgeoisie and its agents—the opportunists—the foundations of socialist economy have already been laid in the U.S.S.R.; when our Party, at its Seventeenth Conference, has laid down as the chief political task of the Second Five-Year Plan—

> "...the final liquidation of capitalist elements and of classes in general; the complete annihilation of the causes which give rise to class differences and exploitation, and the overcoming of capitalist survivals in the economic life and thought of the people, the transformation of the whole working population of the country into conscious and active builders of a classless society;"

—at this moment it is particularly clear that it is precisely the political line of Bolshevism which is the immediate continuation of the line carried out by Marx and Engels throughout their lives. The contemporary struggle of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Communist International against social-fascism,

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counter-revolutionary Trotskyism and all the various forms of opportunism now current, is a continuation of the struggle waged by Marx and Engels all through their lives. The successes of socialist construction are the result of a revolutionary Marxist-Leninist policy directed to the development of the class war against capitalist exploitation, against the bourgeoisie—a war waged by all the oppressed and exploited, under the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat.

* * * * *

In his *Critique,* Marx attacked (in May 1875) the gross opportunist errors on fundamental questions which had been allowed to appear in the programme by the leaders of German Social Democracy, on the occasion of the fusion of the two working-class parties then existing in Germany. These were the "Social Democratic Workers' Party of Germany" (the so-called Eisenachists) led by Liebknecht and Bebel, and the Lassallean party, "The All-German Workers' League," headed by Hasenklever, Hasselmann and Tolk. Both of these parties had sprung up in the 'sixties, when the question of the creation of a united German State was as yet undecided —a question which had played a very important role, as an issue affecting the whole nation, at the time of the Revolution of 1848 and 1849, but had remained without any solution. It was possible to solve it in two ways: either by socialist revolution through a bourgeois-democratic revolution which would be a "prologue" to the proletarian revolution as Marx and Engels had written as early as 1847; or by "the Prussian way," that is, the unification of Germany under the leadership of the military and bureaucratic, semi-feudal Prussian monarchy, and the creation of a bourgeois-Junker State. The party led by Liebknecht and Bebel, strongly influenced by Marx and Engels, fought for the first solution; the Lassallean party, continuing Lassalle's policy, which relied on the aid of the Junker State for the workers in their struggle to improve their economic position, pursued a policy which in fact contributed to the solution of the question of German unity in the Junker way. This was why Marx nicknamed the Lassalleans "Royal Prussian Socialists." A series of wars, especially the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1; the alliance concluded between the bourgeoisie and the Junkers as a result of their fear of the proletariat; the timidity of the German petty-bourgeoisie; the weakness and immaturity of the German proletariat; the defeat of the Paris Commune—all this led to the solution of the question of German unity precisely in the "Prussian" way. Thus one of the most important political divergencies between the two working-class parties ceased to exist. The parties and the working masses demanded unity, but Marx saw

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dangerous opportunism in the unprincipled way in which the leaders of the Eisenach party lightly accepted a program which was a mixture of pre-Marxist and particularly Lassallean dogmas, vulgarized democratic demands and completely distorted Communist thesis. Marx considered an eclectic program of this kind absolutely valueless. In Marx' view such a program would put the Party in danger of sectarianism and petty-bourgeois degeneration; that it would open the door wide to opportunism. And it was to fight against this danger that Marx came forward with his *Critique.*

It is no accident that this work of Marx—first published by Engels in the journal *Neue Zeit,* in 1891, when opportunist tendencies were again growing stronger in German Social Democracy —was never after that republished by the German Social Democrats. And certainly it was no accident that Riazanov[1]—who chose the "Marxism" of the Second International as against Leninism, and finally, to please the Menshevik interventionists, committed direct treachery against the Party and the dictatorship of the proeltariat—during the whole ten years when he was head of the Marx-Engels Institute, could not find time to prepare for the press this important document of revolutionary Marxism.

* * * * *

In the *Critique of the Gotha Programme* the central place is occupied by the analysis of the "development of future Communism," in close association with the question of the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

The immense significance, both for theory and practice, of this section of the *Critique* was forcibly emphasized by Lenin in 1917 in *The State and Revolution,* when he develops the idea of the proletarian dictatorship put forward by Marx. Lenin says: "A most detailed elucidation of this question (i.e. the economic basis for the withering away of the State) is given by Marx in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme.* . . . The polemical part of this remarkable work, consisting of a criticism of Lassalleanism, has, so to speak, overshadowed its positive part, namely, the analysis of the connection between the development of Communism and the withering away of the State."

Putting "the question of the development of Communist society," Lenin writes, "on the basis of the fact that *it has its origin* in capitalism, that it develops historically from capitalism, that it is the result of the action of a social force to which capitalism *has*

[1] Former head of the Marx-Engels Institute, Moscow. Implicated in the affair of the counter-revolutionary Menshevik Bureau, 1931 (Translator's note).

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given birth," there is no shadow of an attempt on Marx' part to conjure up a Utopia, to make idle guesses about that which cannot be known. Marx treats the question of Communism in the same way as a naturalist would treat the question of the development of, say, a new biological species, if he knew that such and such was its origin, and such and such the direction in which it changed."

"Marx, without going into Utopia, defines more fully what can *now* be defined regarding this future, namely, the difference between the lower and higher phases (degrees, stages) of Communist society." He "gives a sober estimate of exactly how a Socialist society will have to manage its affairs. Marx undertakes a *concrete* analysis of the conditions of life of a society in which there is no capitalism. . . ." The analysis of capitalist society and of the inevitable course of its development, of the position and role played in it by the proletariat, the analysis "of the economic basis for the withering away of State" leads Marx to the conclusion of the necessity and inevitability "of a political transition period" "between capitalist and Communist society." The State of this transition period "can be no other than the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat."

In his book *Kautsky the Renegade*, Lenin wrote that "the sum total of all his revolutionary teaching" is contained in this "significant conclusion of Marx' "

In 1918 the renegade Kautsky had the impudence to declare that the slogan (he called it "catchword") of the dictatorship of the proletariat had been put forward by Marx only on one occasion —in the *Critique of the Gotha Programme*. This, of course, is a lie. In fact, the idea of the proletarian dictatorship runs like a red thread through all the teachings of Marx and Engels, through all their works. But there can be no question that in the *Critique*, Marx gave this idea its most clear formulation, and based it on an extended analysis of the development of Communist society, paying particular attention to the question of "the use of the power of the proletariat for the organization of Socialism, for the wiping out of classes, for transition to a classless society, to a society without a State" (Stalin).

The experience of our Revolution, of fourteen years of proletarian dictatorship and socialist construction in our country, the programme of the Second Five-Year Plan—the Five-Year Plan for the wiping out of classes and the building of a classless Socialist society—and the tasks now facing the proletariat of capitalist countries, have fully confirmed the analysis given by Marx "of the transition from capitalism to Communism"—"the first phase of

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Communist society." Lenin's high appreciation of this analysis (expressed in *The State and Revolution*) has been shown to be justified. The whole significance of the relentless struggle carried on by Lenin against the renegades of Marxism of the type of Kautsky, who distorted all the essential ideas of Marx, and against the socialist traitors who have altogether gone over to the camp of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie, is now clear.

* * * * *

The concrete analysis "of the conditions of life of a society in which there will be no capitalism," which is given by Marx in his *Critique,* acquires particular significance in connection with the struggle which the Party now finds it necessary to wage against the "leftist" equalitarians in the sphere of wages, in the sphere of the wages tariff system, the incorrect organization of which leads to fluctuation in labor forces and is one of the most important causes of the lagging behind of some branches of our industry, thereby acting as a drag on Socialist construction.

On more than one occasion Lenin came out against equalitarian "reasoning" which, whether merely unthinkable or hypocritical, in both cases is to the advantage of the bourgeoisie.[2]

The Party, and particularly Comrade Stalin, found it necessary to make a determined attack on the demagogic chatter about equality, when Comrade Zinoviev, in his article "The Philosophy of the Epoch," put forward this slogan in September, 1925.

Last year, when the petty-bourgeois survivals, prejudices and tendencies among our industrial managers and trade unionists were finding such harmful expression in certain sections of the Socialist reconstruction of our national economy, Comrade Stalin, in his historic speech at the Congress of Leaders of Industry, pointed out that the annihilation of leftist equalitarianism was one of the conditions for the successful carrying out of the Five-Year Plan in four years. He cited Marx, referring particularly to the elucidation given by him (in *The Critique of the Gotha Programme*) of the conditions of life during the period of the first phase of Communist society, that is, under Socialism. Here is the passage from Comrade Stalin's speech:

> "Marx and Lenin said that the difference between skilled and unskilled work would continue to exist even under Socialism, and

[2] In addition to the *State and Revolution,* from which we print the passages referring to the *Critique of the Gotha Programmme,* see the following passages: vol. xvii, pp. 241-3; vol. xxiii, pp. 351-7; vol. xxiv, pp. 9, 299-303, 308-311, 422, 518; vol. xxv, pp. 8, 63-4, 469-72 (Third Russian Edition, *Complete works of Lenin*).

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> even after classes had been annihilated; that only under Communism would these difficulties disappear, and that therefore, even under Socialism 'wages' would be paid according to labor performed and not according to need. But our industrialist and trade union equalitarians do not agree with this, and opine that that difference has already disappeared under our Soviet system. Who is right, Marx and Lenin, or our equalitarians? We may take it that Marx and Lenin are right. But if so, it follows that whoever draws up wages scales on the 'principle' of equality, and ignores the difference between skilled and unskilled labor, is at logger-heads with Marxism and Leninism."[3]

When Comrade Stalin declared war on equalitarianism, and our Party, our trade union and economic organizations began to apply consistently this important condition of success in our Socialist construction, the bourgeois and social-fascist critics in other countries, and right and "leftist" critics in the Soviet Union, showed their malignance by attacking with all kinds of hypocritical phrases the slogan put forward by Comrade Stalin. They spoke of concessions to capitalist methods, of departure from Communist principles. Communism, they said, is equality; consequently, the liquidation of equalitarianism amounts to the abandonment of Communist principles, the abandonment of the principles of Marxism.

In his interview with the German writer, Emil Ludwig, Comrade Stalin, dealing with this question, made an express reference to *The Critique of the Gotha Programme*:

> "The sort of Socialism in which everyone receives the same wages, the same quantity of meat, the same quantity of bread, wears just the same clothes, and receives the same products in the same quantity—such a Socialism is unknown to Marxism. Marxism only says: until the final annihilation of classes, and until labor, instead of being a means to existence, has become the first necessity of life—voluntary labor for society—everyone will be paid for his labor in accordance with the work done. 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his labor'—this is the Marxist formula for Socialism, that is, the formula for the first stage of Communism, the first stage of communist society. It is only at the higher stage of Communism, only under the highest phase of Communism, that each individual, working in accordance with his ability, will receive for his labor in accordance with his needs. 'From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.'
>
> "It is absolutely clear that different people have different needs and will continue to have them under Socialism. Socialism has never excluded difference of taste, of quantity and quality in individual needs. Read how Marx criticized Stirner for his tendency to equalitarianism, read Marx' *Critique of the Gotha Programme* of 1875, read the subsequent works of Marx, Engels and Lenin,

[3] Stalin: *New Conditions: New Tasks*, p. 8.

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> and you will see how vigorously they attack equalitarianism. Equalitarianism arises from the peasant mode of thought, the psychology of dividing up everything equally, the psychology of primitive peasant 'Communism.' Equalitarianism has nothing in common with Marxist Socialism. Only people who have no knowledge of Marxism can think of things in such a primitive way, as if the Russian Bolsheviks wanted to gather all wealth together and then divide it up equally. This is the conception of people who have nothing in common with Marxism. Such is the conception of Communism held by people of the type of the primitive 'communists' of the time of Cromwell and the French Revolution. But Marxism and the Russian Bolsheviks have nothing in common with such equalitarian 'Communists,'" (*Bolshevik*, 1932, No. 8, pp. 39-40).

The experience of Socialist construction has been the supreme historical test of the correctness of Marx' extremely penetrating analysis and bold scientific vision, such as we see in *The Critique of the Gotha Programme.*

Fighting against petty-bourgeois equalitarianism, drawing it under the fire of Bolshevik criticism, the Communist Party is fighting for the Marxist-Leninist line against petty-bourgeois, opportunist distortions of the scientific, proletarian Communism of Marx and Lenin.

* * * * *

Marx' letter with the *Critique of the Gotha Programme,* on Engels' suggestion, was printed in the *Neue Zeit* in 1891. At the instance of the editor, and with Engels' consent, it was printed in a slightly shortened form. We now publish the complete text.

After the *Critique* we give in chronological order a number of letters written by Marx and Engels in connection with the Gotha Programme. They supplement on essential points both the polemical and the positive sections of the *Critique,* and also throw light on how it came to be written.

Engels' letter to Bebel of March 18-28, 1875, was written on the basis of his first impressions after he had seen the draft programme published on March 7, 1875, in the organs of the two Socialist parties—the Eisenachist *Volkstaat* and the Lassallean *Neuer Sozial-Democrat.* Engels' suggestions that there should be no delay in uniting the parties, but that it was necessary to aim at isolating the Lassallean leaders while fighting for the rank and file, were not followed by the Eisenachists. In the preparatory material for his pamphlet, *The State and Revolution,* Lenin notes that this letter is of "extremely great importance on the question of the State"; he makes a most detailed analysis of the letter, and brings out the theoretical propositions developed in it.

Marx' letter to V. Bracke on May 5, 1875, which accompanied

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the *Critique*, points out the gross tactical errors made by the leaders of the Eisenach party—especially Liebknecht—in the negotiations for unity. The threat is clearly expressed that if the programme is accepted, Marx and Engels will make a public declaration that they have nothing in common with it. This letter contains the well-known statement that "a single step of the real movement is worth a dozen programmes." Opportunists of all sects—both in Russia and in Western countries—have tried to use this dictum of Marx' in their own fight against irreconcilability in theoretical questions of principle and programme, that is, their fight against revolutionary Marxism, claiming to find in it the justification for any vulgarization of theory whatever, any theoretical eclecticism, any opportunism and naked empiricism in practice.

In 1902, when the "economist" group round the paper *Rabocheye Dielo* cited this phrase of Marx in justification of their own opportunist practice, Lenin decisively defeated this attempt, explaining the real meaning of Marx' words in connection with the concrete situation in which they were written: "If you must combine," Marx wrote to the leaders of the Party, "then enter into agreements to satisfy the practical aims of the movement; but do not haggle over principles, do not make 'concessions' in theory. This was Marx' idea. . . ." (*What Is To Be Done?*.)

Two subsequent letters written by Engels—to Bracke at Braunschweig, dated the 11th, and to Bebel at Leipzig, dated October 12th, 1875—contain an analysis of the program which had then been adopted; though brief, the criticism is devastating.

These letters give an explanation of why Marx and Engels refrained from carrying out their first intention of coming out publicly against the Gotha Programme. Engels refers to the fact that both the bourgeoisie and the Party masses, the workers, "interpret" the confused programme "in a Communist sense," and "put into" it "our intention," that is, a revolutionary content. In this connection it is necessary to call attention to the passages in these letters in which Engels refers directly to the inevitability of splits in the present period. Marx and Engels were undoubtedly moving towards a split with the leaders of the Lassalleans.

In the united Party the "specific Lassallean" influence—with its tendency to come to terms with Bismarck and its faith in the all-saving virtue of universal suffrage and of productive associations formed with State aid—became considerably weaker, particularly during the years when the Exceptional Laws were in force (1878-90). Moreover, the former "Eisenachists," whose policy was close to that of Marx and Engels, soon ousted the Lassalleans from the

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leading positions in the Party. The question of a split on the precise issue of the programme therefore fell to the ground, and with it disappeared the need for any public criticism of this particular document.

Opportunism and conciliationism made their appearance in the united Party as a result of new experiences, new circumstances. Marx and Engels found it necessary to carry on an energetic fight against opportunism in German Social Democracy (*Anti-Duehring*, *Circular Letter*, 1879, *Critique of the Erfurt Programme*, etc.).

The errors which had been allowed to creep in when the parties united at Gotha necessarily showed their influence at a later stage, the more so because German Social Democracy had never made any fundamental criticism of these errors. The significance attached by Engels to the continued influence of these errors is shown by the two documents which we publish, dealing with the struggle carried on by Engels in connection with the publication of Marx' *Critique of the Gotha Programme* in 1891.

The first of these is the introduction written by Engels in 1891 for Marx' *Critique* when it was published in *Neue Zeit*, the central theoretical organ of the German Party. In the period following the repeal of the anti-Socialist laws a strong opportunist tendency began to show itself in the leading circles of the Party, and particularly among the members of the Social Democratic fraction in the Reichstag. The revision of the Party programme which was then coming up for consideration served as the occasion for Engels to come out against the opportunists by publishing this *Critique* of Marx', whose name was inscribed on the Party's banner—though, it is true, along with the name of Lassalle. Engels himself spoke of this publication as a "bomb" (in his letter to Sorge of January 17, 1891). By threatening if necessary to publish the *Critique* in Vienna he *compelled* Kautsky, then editor of the *Neue Zeit*, to print it in the central theoretical organ of German Social Democracy. Its publication gave "immense satisfaction" to the mass of the Party rank and file, but, as Engels expected, it produced extreme exasperation among the "Socialistic big-whigs" letter to Sorge, February 11, 1891). The Reichstag fraction hastened to declare from the tribune, through Grillenberger, that the Party dissociated itself from Marx' views and directives, especially his idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, and had never propagated them. *Vorwaerts*, the central organ of the Party, printed an official declaration that the *Critique* had been published without the knowledge of the Central Committee, which would never have given its consent to it; and Bebel considered it necessary to repeat

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this declaration in his own name. Engels' reply to these agitated cries from the leaders was a second "bomb"—the re-publication of *The Civil War in France*, that vehement manifesto in which Marx made a general historical analysis of the Paris workers' first heroic attempt to "storm heaven," to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat. Engels concluded his introduction to the new edition of *The Civil War* with the following passage, directed against the "Socialistic big-whigs" of Germany:

> "Of late the Social-Democratic philistine[4] has once more been filled with wholesome terror at the words: *Dictatorship of the Proletariat*. Well and good, gentlemen, do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. This was the Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

The last document—Engels' letter to Kautsky, dated February 23, 1891—is a telling exposure of the hostile reception given by the Social Democratic "big whigs" to the publication of Marx' *Critique* by Engels. Engels replied to their reproaches that this *Critique* would put "weapon into the hands of our enemies," and brings out the need for a fight against opportunism, emphasizing the importance of "relentless self-criticism" as the strongest weapon both for this fight and for the attainment of ideological unity within the Party. What is also of extreme value in this letter is the merciless characterization of Lassalle—an outline of the work which Engels intended to write with the object of liquidating "the Lassalle legend." Already at that time Kautsky was helping to spread this legend. He sang Lassalle's praises, giving it as his opinion that "all the older members of the Party, and also the majority of the younger members, have derived from his works their first Socialist knowledge and their first passionate enthusiasm for Socialism." Not only this, but Kautsky put Lassalle on the same rank with Marx as a leader and teacher of the German proletariat. It was precisely these and similar statements made by Kautsky and others which caused Engels to make the protest in his letter against "the Lassalle legend."[5]

In this edition of Marx' *Critique of the Gotha Programme* we print all of these documests, and also an extract from Lenin's notes dealing with "Marxism on the State," and sections from Lenin's book *The State and Revolution* which refer directly to the *Critique*. These documents show us how Lenin *learned* from Marx and En-

[4] The officials of the German Social Democratic Party altered the words "*Social Democratic* philistine" "*German* philistine."

[5] The notes to this letter of Engels' on pages 73 to 78, give a more detailed analysis of Kautsky's position.

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gels, how, *in his own fight against opportunism* and for the pro-proletarian revolution, his work, so far as theory was concerned, *was based on Marx and Engels*. Lenin's fight against the opportunists and renegades of his day was the direct continuation of the fight waged by Marx and Engels against bourgeois distortions and vulgarization of Marxism, and for proletarian revolutionary theory and policy.

Replying to the lamentations of the leaders of German Social Democracy over the publication of the *Critique*, Engels confidently declared: "Marx' criticism will force its way through, and it was precisely with this object that I published it." And it did force its way through. In Lenin's hands the *Critique* was once again revealed as one of Marx' most important works, with whose help Lenin dealt annihilating blows against the "theories" of the renegades who had passed into the camp of the counter-revolutionaries —Kautsky, Vandervelde and Company. Lenin once more established and further developed Marx' teaching on the State, on the proletarian dictatorship, on the period of transition from capitalism to Communism, on the two phases of Communism: Socialist and Communist society. And it was precisely on the basis of *The Critique of the Gotha Programme* than Lenin, in Chapter V of *The State and Revolution*, which we now reprint, developed that brilliant picture—based on real scientific insight—of the transition through Socialism to Communism, which the Seventeenth Conference of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union laid down as the basis for the struggle for the abolition of classes and the building of a Socialist society in the Second Five-Year Plan.

Marx' *Critique of the Gotha Programme* has served as a model in the irreconcilable struggle for the basic ideas of scientific Communism and against all distortions. The *Critique*, together with Lenin's further development of its principles, has given us that "certainty of orientation, clarity of perspective, confidence in our work, faith in the triumph of our cause" (Stalin), which have always assured the victory of our Party and are the main guarantee that the world-historic tasks of the Second Five-Year Plan will be fulfilled.

* * * * *

The Critique of the Gotha Programme touches on a number of important theoretical questions besides those to which we have referred above.

April 14, 1932.

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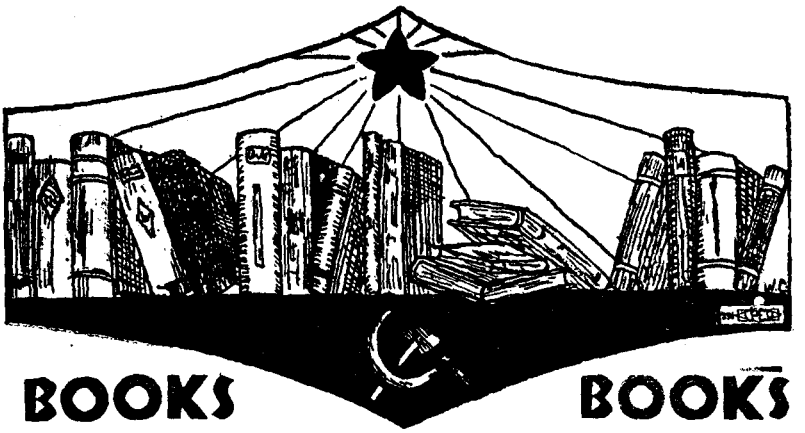

NEW LENIN VOLUMES

"Towards the Seizure of Power," Collected Works, Vol. XXI. Books I and II.

The Revolution of 1917: from the July Days to the October Revolution.

Reviewed by Moissaye J. Olgin*

(*Concluded from May Issue*)

With sweeping power, with a breadth of vision and a moving sincerity, Lenin sums up the situation in the following words:

> "The war has brought about such an immense crisis, it has so strained the material and moral forces of the people, it has dealt such blows to the entire modern social organization, that humanity is confronted with the alternative of either perishing or entrusting its fate to the most revolutionary class for the purpose of passing most speedily and in the most radical way to a higher method of production."

Substitute "crisis" for "war" and you have a program for today, for every capitalist country in the world.

Lenin continues:

> "War is implacable; it puts the question with merciless sharpness: Either overtake the advanced countries and surpass them *also economically*, or perish."

It appears that the slogan, "Catch Up With and Overtake the Advanced Capitalist Countries," the great slogan of the first and second Five-Year Plans, was originated even before the October revolution.

Will the Bolsheviks, will the Soviets be able to overcome the resistance of the bourgeoisie? To this Lenin replies:

> "Once power has passed to the Soviets, the resistance of the bourgeoisie will result in *scores* and *hundreds* of workers and peasants 'watching,' supervising, controlling, and testing *every single* capitalist, for the interests of the workers and peasants will demand

* Comrade Olgin translated these volumes from the Russian.

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> struggle against the capitalists' deception of the people. The forms and methods of this testing and control have been developed and simplified by capitalism itself, by such creations of capitalism as the banks, the large factories, the trusts, the railroads, the post-office, the consumers' societies, and the trade unions. It will be quite sufficient for the Soviets to punish those capitalists, who evade the most detailed accounting or who deceive the people, by confiscating all their property and arresting them for a short time, to break the resistance of the bourgeoisie by these bloodless means."

Of course, leaving the bourgeoisie in possession of the means of production and only keeping control over it was the first step in the program of passing from capitalism to socialism. Organized production, planned production is possible only where the bourgeoisie has been liquidated as a class.

> "Under a Soviet system," says Lenin, "we will be able not only to work, *but to work better than under the capitalist system* [My italics—M.J.O.]. We must not only crush every kind of resistance," says Lenin, "we must *make people work* within the framework of the new state organization."
>
> "We will make everybody work," says Lenin. "We need good organizers in banking, and in the work of combining enterprises. . . ; we need more and more engineers, agronomists, technicians, scientific experts of every kind. We shall give all such workers work which they are able and are accustomed to do; probably, we shall only gradually bring in equality for all work, leaving a temporary higher rate of pay for such specialists during the transition period, but we shall put them under an all-embracing workers' control; we shall attain the full and unconditional application of the rule: 'He who works not, neither shall he eat.' As for the organizational form of the work, we take it ready-made from capitalism: banks, syndicates, the best factories, experimental stations, academies, etc.; we need adopt only the best models furnished by the experience of the most advanced countries."

One would think Lenin was laying down the foundations of the first Five-Year Plan with the application of American technique and with the use of the "spets" (specialists).

Not the least of Lenin's concern of these times, as of the entire period, is the peasantry. Over and over again, he calls attention to the sample instructions comprising 242 instructions presented by local delegates before the All-Russian Congress of Peasant Deputies in Petrograd in the year 1917. This Summary springing from the masses of the peasants themselves, expressing the sentiments of the rank and file peasants in the various localities of Russia, demands the abolition without compensation of all private ownership of land, including peasant ownership, the transfer of all better farms or estates into the hands of the state or of peasant communes, confiscation of all live stock and implements, and their transfer to the state or to peasant communes, the prohibition of hired labor, and equal distribution of land among the toiling masses.

It was obvious that those demands could not be realized by a democratic government, neither by the Constituent Assembly.

> "Even a perfunctory examination of the above demands," says Lenin, "shows the utter impossibility of realizing them in alliance

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with the capitalists. There must be a complete break with them, a most resolute and pitiless struggle with the capitalist class, a final destruction of their power."

And that meant the establishment of the power of the Soviets.

With all his fury, Lenin brands the Socialist-Revolutionists who promised the peasants all these reforms while clinging to the bourgeois-democratic form of government.

> "The self-deception of the Socialist-Revolutionaries and their deception of the peasantry consists in that they accept and spread the idea that these changes . . . are feasible without the abolition of capitalist domination, without the passing of power into the hands of the proletariat, without the poorest peasants supporting the most sweeping revolutionary measures of the proletarian state against the capitalists. It is this that makes the crystallizing Left Wing of the Socialist-Revolutionaries so significant. It proves that there is a growing awareness of this self-deception within the party itself."

The left Socialist-Revolutionists aided the Bolsheviks in the seizure of power during the November revolution, and were represented in the first Council of People's Commissars. The alliance was of brief duration. The S.-R.'s, even of the left variety, were too bound up with bourgeois ideology to be able to march in step with the proletariat. After an unsuccessful attempt at insurrection *against* the Soviets in the spring of 1918, they sank into insignificance only to merge with the rest of that degraded and demoralized "party." Nevertheless, during the revolution, they played a certain role, and Lenin was the last man to overlook allies, no matter how insignificant in the sum total of the revolutionary course.

But will the Bolsheviks maintain power once they have seized it? The question is answered in the above-mentioned tract, "Will the Bolsheviks Maintain State Power?" The lengthy article is a masterly analysis of all the social forces in a country confronted with an unprecedented situation and must serve as an example of how Marxian analysis should be made.

That the positive conclusions reached by Lenin were correct, was proven by the subsequent events.

With stinging irony, Lenin speaks about the reformists who would like to have a "revolution" without upheavals and bloodshed (the Second International variety). Lenin describes the type in the following way:

> "He would be ready to accept the social revolution, if history would lead up to it in the same peaceful, quiet, smooth, orderly way in which a German express train approaches a station. A sedate conductor opens the door of the car and calls out: 'Social Revolution Station! *Alle aussteigen.*'"

And again and again, Lenin says:

> "Do not try to scare us, gentlemen, we won't be scared."

* * * *

On September 16, writing a draft resolution on the political situation, Lenin said, under point 11:

> "Events in the Russian Revolution, particularly after May 19, and still more so after July 16, have been developing with such incredible, storm and hurricane-like velocity, that it can by no means be the task of the party to hastem them; on the contrary, all efforts

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must be directed towards not lagging behind events, towards keeping up with our work of explaining to the workers and to the toilers in general, as far as it is in our power, the changes in the situation and in the course of the class struggle. This is the main task of our party at present: to explain to the masses that the situation is very critical; that every action may end in an explosion; that therefore a premature uprising may cause the greatest harm."

While realizing that an uprising at that time would be premature, Lenin adds:

"At the same time, the critical situation inevitably leads the working class—perhaps even with catastrophic speed—to a situation where, due to a change in events independent of its will, it will find itself compelled to enter into a decisive battle with the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie and to conquer power."

The decisive moment came a few weeks later. Lenin devoted all his analytical power, all his influence with the party and the working class, all his revolutionary temperament, all his persuasive power, to make it clear to the masses, as well as to the leaders, that the time had come and that history had put an armed uprising on the order of the day.

The origin of the November uprising is told by Trotsky in the following manner:

"As soon as the order for the removal of the troops [from Petrograd] was communicated by Headquarters to the Executive Committee of the Petrograd Soviets . . . it became clear that this question in its further development would have decisive political significance. The idea of an insurrection began to take form from the moment. It was no longer necessary to invent a Soviet body [to carry through the uprising]. The real aim of the future committee [the Military Revolutionary Committee] was unequivocally brought out when in the same session Trotsky concluded his report on the withdrawal of the Bolsheviks from the Pre-Parliament with the exclamation: 'Long live the direct and open struggle for a revolutionary power throughout the country.' That was a transition into the language of Soviet legality of the slogan: "Long live the armed insurrection!'" (Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution*, Vol. III, p. 92.)

The story is as modest as it is true to historic fact. The Mensheviks and the Social-Revolutionaries in the Petrograd Soviet introduced a motion to create a "Committee of Revolutionary Defense." The Bolsheviks seized upon the idea viewing the future committee as "the chief lever of the revolution." *The idea of an insurrection began to take form from that moment.* The idea did not take form before, because it was not advanced by Trotsky. The father of the idea was, most naturally, Trotsky.

But what are the historical facts? The meeting Trotsky mentions took place on October 22. Already on September 25-27 Lenin writes a letter to the Central Committee, the Petrograd and Moscow Committees of the Bolshevik Party in which he says:

"Having obtained the majority in the Soviets of Workers' and Soldiers Deputies of both capitals, the Bolsheviks can and must take power into their hands."

And further:

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> "Assume power at once in Moscow and in Petrograd (it does not matter which begins; perhaps even Moscow may begin); we will win *absolutely* and *unquestionably*."

This was written about a month before Trotsky's proposal in the Petrograd Soviet.

Was this anything unexpected to the Bolsheviks? Ever since July the idea of an armed uprising became paramount in the minds of the Bolsheviks and recurrs in their propaganda. The idea of *uprising as an art* is discussed with increasing frequency. Between the end of September and the end of October Lenin kept on developing the idea of an uprising with enormous power. In another letter to the Central Committee, written September 26-27, he says:

> "Having recognized the absolute necessity of an uprising of the workers of Petrograd and Moscow for the sake of saving the revolution and of saving Russia from being 'separately' divided among the imperialists of both coalitions, we must first adapt our political tactics at the conference [called by Kerensky] to the conditions of the maturing uprising; secondly, we must prove that we accept, and not only in words, the idea of Marx about the necessity of treating uprising as an art."

On October 10th, in a letter to Smilga, then Chairman of the Regional Committee of the Army, Navy and Workers of Finland, he again writes:

> "It seems to me that, in order correctly to prepare the minds, we must immediately put forward the slogan, 'all power to the Petrograd Soviet *now*, later to be transferred to the Congress of Soviets.'"

In that letter he ask Smilga to make preparations for this task. Again in an article, "The Crisis Has Matured," written October the 12th, Lenin stresses the point that the Bolsheviks must not wait for the Congress of the Soviets to seize power.

> "There is not the slightest doubt that the Bolsheviks, were they to allow themselves to be caught in the trap of constitutional illusions, of 'faith' in the Congress of Soviets and in the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, of 'waiting' for the Congress of Soviets, etc.—that such Bolsheviks would prove *miserable traitors* to the proletarian cause."

He winds up in these historic words:

> "The crisis has matured. The whole future of the Russian Revolution is at stake. The whole honor of the Bolshevik Party is in question. The whole future of the international workers' revolution for Socialism is at stake."

Were all the leading Bolsheviks of that time in accord with Lenin? Here too Trotsky has many things to say.

> "The very recent attempt of official historians to present this matter [the decision of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party on October 23 to start an armed uprising] as though the whole guiding strata of the Party except Zinoviev and Kamenev stood for the insurrection goes to pieces when confronted by facts and documents."

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The "official historians," of course, are wrong. They all hide the truth. Trotsky, the historian of Trotsky, alone tells the objective truth! To prove his point that most of the Bolsheviks were not in favor of insurrection, he cites a number of facts from his own memory and a number of instances where one or the other Bolshevik voted against one or the other resolution at one or another time. He adduces the testimony of the Bolshevik Sadovsky, who later wrote about a certain "vagueness and lack of confidence which prevailed at that time" and about "debates and conflicts" even within the Central Committee itself. How dreadful!

Looked at historically it would have been surprising if there were no debates, discussions, a certain disagreement in details, a certain questioning of the when and how of the uprising in spite of favorable circumstances. The line was clear. Lenin's leadership was adamant. It was the first mass uprising in history for the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

It is not necessary here to defend the Soviet historiography. It may be of interest, however, to show on sample that "official historians" do *not* present "this matter" as though the whole general staff of the Bolshevik Party in September and October, except Zinoviev and Kamenev, had no differences of opinion or shades of opinion concerning the insurrection. We select the first history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union that comes to our hands. It is a large volume entitled *C.P.U.S.S.R.(b)* written for the use of Party schools and for more developed workers generally. The author is the present All-Union Commissar of Education, A. A. Bubnov, who compiled the book in collaboration with a number of other comrades and with the assistance of the Lenin Institute of the Central Committee o the C. P. U. S. S. R. On page 492 of the volume we read:

> "The course on insurrection taken by Lenin, however, met with resistance on the part of some members of the Central Committee, in the first place on the part of Kamenev and Zinoviev."

Bubnov does *not* confine the disagreement to Kamenev and Zinoviev.

Bubnov proceeds to tell how Lenin was in favor of the Bolsheviks boycotting the Democratic Conference, how opinions within the Central Committee for and against participation were divided equally and how the fraction of the Democratic Conference voted 77 against 50 *against* boycotting the Pre-Parliament.

The historian of the Party does not conceal the existence of differences of opinions at that time. But he also records that opinions changed rapidly and that soon there was a majority within the Central Committee in favor of withdrawing from the Pre-Parliament, which decision was adopted at the session of October 18. He then adds:

> "As to the question of insurrection and preparation for it, the majority of the Party organizations expressed themselves in favor of Lenin's point of view. A resolution to that effect was adopted by the Petrograd and Regional Bureau on September 27, by the Moscow City Conference on October 23, etc."

Trotsky's statement to the effect that only on October 9, when the plan of a military revolutionary committee was adopted by the Petrograd Soviet, "the idea of an insurrection began to take form," thus collapses like a house of cards. So does the lie about the incorrectness of "official historians."

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Trotsky says about Bolshevik memoir writers:

> "We must not forget that in all recollections of this kind the doubts are painted in water-colors and the confidence in heavy oils."

With Trotsky it is more than a matter of shading. It is distorting historical facts to prove that there was only one great revolutionist who never made mistakes, although he had never been a Bolshevik—and that was Leon Trotsky. Lenin too had some sound ideas, Trotsky indulgently admits. But as to the real revolution, it was the conception and the work of Trotsky.

The reader of the volume, *Towards the Seizure of Power*, is overwhelmed with the evidence of Lenin's tremendous driving power, his revolutionary passion which does not interfere with but enhances the clarity of his revolutionary vision. "Will the Bolsheviks retain state power?" he asks. The answer is given in a tract under the same name, written October 7-14, which is one of the best masterpieces of revolutionary pamphleteering. Lenin enumerates the various assertions of the Cadets, the Social-Revolutionaries and, as he calls them, the "semi-Bolsheviks," and one by one he shows their flimsiness and their springing from a desire to defend the power of the capitalists and the landlords. It is here that he quotes Marx about revolution as an art:

> "Insurrection is an art quite as much as war or any other, and subject to certain rules of proceeding, which, when neglected, will produce the ruin of the party neglecting.... First, never play with insurrection unless you are fully prepared to face the consequences of your play.... Secondly, the insurrectionary career once entered upon, act with the greatest determination and on the offensive. The defensive is the death of every armed rising.... Surprise your antagonists while their forces are scattering, prepare new successes, however small, but daily; keep up the moral ascendancy which the first successful rising has given to you; rally those vacillating elements to your side which always follow the strongest impulse, and which always look out for the safer side; force your enemies to a retreat before they can collect their strength against you; in the words of Danton... *de l'audace, de l'audace, encore, de l'audace!*"

There follows in the volume a thorough discussion of the changes to be made in the Party program (written Oct. 29-30), a number of resolutions and a series of letters to the Bolsheviks on the very eve of the insurrection. One "Letter to Comrades," published in the paper *Rabochy Put* on November 1, 2, and 3, he again meets all the objections against immediate seizure of power, and stresses the urgency of immediate seizure. In this letter, perhaps even more than in others, he is at once equipped with facts and arguments, with an annihilating contempt for the compromisers and a burning insistence upon immediate action.

The letters dealing with Zinoviev and Kamenev are particularly revealing. Zinoviev and Kamenev, Lenin's closest political associates, not only took a stand against the uprising, but they appeared in a non-Party paper, *Novaya Zhizn*, with an article in which they declared themselves "against any attempt to take the initiative of an armed uprising which would be doomed to defeat and which would have the most dangerous effect upon the Party, the proletariat, the fate of the Revolution."

In a letter to the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, written November 3, Lenin says:

> "A self-respecting party cannot tolerate strike-breaking and

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> strike-breakers in its midst. This is obvious. The more we think about Zinoviev's and Kamenev's appearance in the non-party press, the more obvious it becomes that their action has all the elements of strike-breaking in it."

Lenin does not confine himself to criticism. He demands action. He insists on the expulsion of the two from the Party.

The fact that Lenin continues to work hand in hand with Zinoviev and Kamenev only proves that he was ready to cooperate with any comrade who admitted his error and was ready to follow the line of the Party.

The second half of the second book of the present volume is occupied by Lenin's famous tract, *State and Revolution,* bearing the subtitle, "Marxist Teaching About the Theory of the State and the Tasks of the Proletariat in the Revolution," a work too well known to every Communist to require a special review in this connection. The postscrips, however, must be pointed out. The tract was written in August and September, 1917, while Lenin was in hiding outside of Petrograd. It was written at a time when armed uprising had become the order of the day. It was written by a man who participated in all phases of the revolutionary movement. In the midst of feverish activities Lenin found both time and energy to write this book because it was necessary for the revolution. The tract was first published early in 1918. In the portscript to this first edition, written in December, 1917, Lenin says that he had already drawn up the plan also for the next, the seventh chapter, on the experiences of the Russian Revolution of 1905 and 1917, but, he adds, "I did not succeed in writing a single line of the chapter; what 'interfered' was the political crisis—the eve of the October Revolution of 1917....It is more pleasant and useful to go through the 'experiences of the revolution' than to write about it."

It must only be repeated that the volume, *Towards the Seizure of Power,* together with the preceding volume, *The Revolution of* 1917, are absolutely indispensable to an understanding of the Russian Revolution and of the program of every proletarian revolution.

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